



ANCIENT STRENGTHENING TECHNIQUE

BOOK 10

I Am Superfluous

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Ancient Strengthening Technique

(심판의 군주)

by

I Am Superfluous

(我是多余人)

Synopsis

A human warrior cultivating the Ancient Strengthening Technique has transcended dimensions and arrived on Kyushu.

Together with twelve ravishing beauties with looks that were unmatched in their generation,

will he be able to stand on the summit of this world?

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Book 10: Eastern Victory Divine Continent, Exquisite Bell Spirit

AST 826 – En Route To The Central Continent

Before its current breakthrough, the Nine-Petal Lotus had been able to speed up the growth of creatures within the radius of 100 meters by 20%, but only if they lived in the waters of the pond.

After the breakthrough of the Realm of the Violet Jade Immortal to the seventh grade, the Nine-Petal Lotus' level had also increased, and it now affected a radius of 200 meters. The speed of growth had also been increased by 10% – now speeding up the growth of water creatures by 30%.

Despite the increase in the Nine-Petal Lotus' area of effect, it was impossible to affect every living creature in the water, as the pond had also grown larger in size. Fortunately, the Blood Coral, Golden Bull Grass, and Nine-Headed Lion Grass were within that range. A 30% increase in growing speed was a huge boon for the water creatures and organisms – of course, this was nothing compared to the improvements to the Realm of the Violet Jade Immortal.

The Golden Buddha Aura Lotus seemed to remain the same. However, Qing Shui was happy to see that the lotus had grown back a petal. Essentially, this meant that he had gained an additional chance to avoid death. One life-saving petal was enough to be regarded as an item of high value.

Qing Shui proceeded to look around the Realm of the Violet Jade Immortal. The multiplicative time ratio of the realm had increased, but the time limit to remain inside the realm hadn't changed at all – it was the same six hours of time outside.

It seemed as if the time to remain inside the Realm of the Violet Jade Immortal had hit its limit. Perhaps it might increase in the future. However, the possibility of that happening was slim, since it hadn't changed even after the critical breakthrough to the seventh level.

Oh!

Ice Snow Sacred Fruit!

Now there were two Ice Snow Sacred Fruit Trees inside the realm!

He thought he had mistaken about what he had seen, but not after a second look. One of the trees contained two budding fruits, and the other one contained two ripened Ice Snow Sacred Fruits.

The Ice Snow Sacred Fruit had a certain chance of advancing the cultivation base of a demonic beast to another realm once the fruit had been eaten. If not, then the demonic beast would instead gain 200 countries of strength. However, only Grade Two Martial Saint to Peak Martial Saint demonic beasts would be affected. The effects would occur up to the Grand Perfection Stage of Peak Martial Saint.

It would take 500 years for the tree to bloom the flowers of the fruit and then another 100 years to form the fruit. After that, it would take another 500 years for the fruit to ripen. Overall, each fruit would take at least 1100 years to ripen from start to finish.

Despite being a valuable item, 1100 years was a lengthy amount of time. However, 400 years in the Realm of the Violet Jade Immortal was equivalent to one year in the real world. In other words, the fruit would take less than three actual years to ripen. Fortunately, Qing Shui had something else that could strengthen the quality of the fruits – the Flower of Life.

Five Flowers of Life could increase the life force and quality of the plants within a radius of 500 meters by 10%.

Doing so would reduce the time needed to grow a plant by 10%. The sixth Flower of Life would soon blossom in less than a year. After all, the fifth flower had already gone through the final stage of full bloom.

With a total of six Flowers of Life, the plants within 600 meters would receive an increase of 20% to their life force, and a 20% increase to their quality. As more Flowers of Life began to bloom, the time for growth would be cut by 10% and the quality increased by 10% each time. Besides a plant's breed, its age was the next-most important factor used to measure its quality for medicine refining.

A 10% change with the Ice Snow Sacred Fruit was more or less 100 years of time in the Realm of the Violet Jade Immortal. If he continued to wait for the sixth Flower of Life to blossom, then he could save 20% of the time, which was about 220 years. In real time, that would be a little more than half a year. By then, the Ice Snow Sacred Fruits would have left two more years before it could reach the mature stage.

Qing Shui looked at bowl-sized flowers. They were blood red in color, with a hint of vividness in them. One look at the Flowers of Life and anyone could tell that they were really uncommon and precious. The healthier a flower was, the prettier and glorious it would seem.

The sixth flower was beginning to blossom, but not quite fully yet. It would fully bloom in about a year. Qing Shui was more than happy about the sixth Flower of Life – not only would the flower improve the quality of the medicinal herbs, he could also use the flower for medicinal refining too. In the future, Qing Shui was most anticipating the blossoming of the tenth flower, which he planned to keep for Luan Luan. It could be used to increase one's lifespan by 200 years.

With the time ratio of 400:1 relative to the outside world, it would take 6500 years for the tenth Flower of Life to blossom starting from the first Flower of Life. In other words, it would be 20 years in real time. Currently, there were already five flowers, so it would take 4900 years for the tenth flower to bloom. In real time, that would be about 12 years of time.

This amount of time was still acceptable. Luan Luan's total lifespan had already been increased to about 150 years after she had consumed the Peach of Immortality, Wondrous Fruit, Vitality-Enhancing Fruit, and the Yang Pellet given by Qing Shui.

The Peach of Immortality and the Yang Pellet could increase one's lifespan by 50 years. These were the best items that Qing Shui had for increasing a human's lifespan. Medicinal pills or fruits that could increase a lifespan by 50 years were already

considered extraordinary items. Although it wasn't quite at that level, the 'Wondrous Fruit' was still valuable nonetheless.

Because only one of the Flower of Life could be consumed, Qing Shui decided to leave the tenth flower for Luan Luan. After another one grew out, he would give that Flower of Life to his mother. Currently, Qing Yi's lifespan was about 500 years, so there was still time for the flower to grow out.

Qing Shui took two of the Ice Snow Sacred Fruits and stored them in his inventory. When he thought about the Wondrous Fruit, he remembered that he had picked some within the past few years. It was almost time for the fruits to ripen, so he went to their location immediately.

The Wondrous Fruit was best consumed by children under the age of 12 in order to increase their potential ability. Each child could only eat one fruit, which was enough to increase 10% of every potential ability. Moreover, their speed of cultivation would be increased by 10% as well.

Luan Luan and Yuchang had eaten them before. As for Qing Jun and his other children, they were all too young and weren't quite ready to eat the fruits. However, he did leave some of these potential-enhancing items for Canghai Mingyue, Shi Qingzhuang, and the other ladies, just in case he couldn't return in time to give them to the children. The Wondrous Fruit didn't take a long time to ripen – one fruit would fully ripen in just a year.

Beyond the Wondrous Fruits, there was a landscape of luscious vines. The Wondrous Fruit was part of a plant of vines that were as

thick as an adult's waist. The coiling of the vines seemed to resemble a giant scarlet python slithering about.

There weren't any changes to the number of fruits that had been produced – there was still one fruit hanging on the vines. However, one fruit was enough for now. Since the ratio of time in the Realm of the Violet Jade Immortal had been increased, the vines could produce two fruits in about one year.

Right now, Qing Shui was standing in front of the Five Qi Sun Grasses to observe their growth. The Five Qi Sun Grass was a foot and a half tall and was comprised of five flowers colored red, orange, yellow, green, and blue all bunched together. Essentially, each flower of the Five Qi Sun Grass seemed to be surrounded by a faint light which looked quite magical. Qing Shui wouldn't have thought that the Five Qi Sun Grass was a miraculous medicinal herb if he hadn't seen the subtle light being emitted. The group of 50 Five Qi Sun Grasses lying together in a flowerbed seemed extremely beautiful.

Qing Shui spent the remaining time focusing on his cultivation. He needed to have a full grasp of his newfound abilities, so he decided to continue practicing the Roc Form, the Thousand Crane Slash, and the Thousand Hammer Technique.

Qing Shui decided he would also require some time to master the new alchemy recipes. Since the time ratio had increased, he had spent exactly 100 days cultivating his skills, equivalent to six hours in real time. (Author's Note: With the 400:1 ratio, Qing Shui was allowed six hours in real time = 2400 hours in the Realm of the Violet Jade Immortal. Since 24 hours = 1 day, theoretically, Qing

Shui had spent exactly 100 days in total.)

With the increased time limit, Qing Shui felt that he had sufficient time to train his skills. Each day for six hours in real time, he could spend 100 days worth of time in his cultivation. In the future, Qing Shui would never need to cultivate in the real world, except for his mandatory morning exercise. He could spend his time on other activities, like searching for treasures, understanding the World of the Nine Continents, or socializing with other people so that he could benefit from their help.

The time spendable in the realm had gone from 50 days to 100 days. Even though really only a day had passed, he had spent approximately two and a half months inside the Realm of the Violet Jade Immortal. When he got out from the realm, he gradually forgot about the incident in the crystal palace. Immediately, Qing Shui summoned his Fire Bird and flew straight to the east.

He would be leaving the Greencloud Continent for the Central Continent or the Eastern Victory Divine Continent. His sole purpose was to find the Sky Penetrating Grass of 5,000 years or above, and he had a feeling that he could find the medicinal herb more easily in the Eastern Victory Divine Continent that was known to be filled with an abundance of Spiritual Qi.

Qing Shui felt that the search for Sky Penetrating Grass would prove to be quite difficult based on his impression of the Five Qi Sun Grass. He planned to find the 5,000 Years Sky Penetrating Grass first, and if he could not find it, he would find some suitable substitute for the ingredient. Whether it would actually work, only

God would know.

Nine Continents Step!

Qing Shui continued to fly towards the east, entering the marsh area about 10,000 li ahead. Theoretically, the Nine Continents Step would be able to transport Qing Shui just outside the marsh. By midnight, the Nine Continents Step could be used again. Hopefully, Qing Shui thought, the Nine Continents Step could bypass the marsh as fast as possible.

Six hours of the outside world could be spent in the Realm of the Violet Jade Immortal. Qing Shui would always go into the realm for three hours before midnight to train. As for the remaining three hours, he could go in anytime he wanted.

Qing Shui decided not to return home now – he hadn't spent too long outside just yet. His family already knew that he was out. If he were to go back now, he would have to leave again soon anyways.

Di Qing had already left the Qing Residence to travel back to her home. If she had promised to come back to Qing Clan back then, then he would have been going to the Central Continent with her right now.

While en route to the Central Continent, he took some time to train his skills. The days were uninteresting, but he was quite motivated to strengthen himself. Occasionally, he would think about the woman from the crystal coffin, and how he was defenseless against her attack. He hated that kind of feeling, even

if he tried to ignore his emotions. Even if he were to be bitten by an ant, he would still feel the pain trickling through his skin.

Even though he was furious, he didn't exactly hate that woman. He loathed himself for being weak – if he had been stronger, he wouldn't have been so easily controlled by the poison. She had the right to treat him that way, despite Qing Shui saving her from the poison. But he had made some horrible moves on her, so if she were to kill him, he deserved it. After all, how could she stand an outsider disrespecting her like that.....

During that time, he had run away as quickly as possible without turning his head to look at her. He didn't want to die and that woman clearly didn't want to be acquainted with him, which was why he had left so quickly. He didn't want the woman to think he had other plans for her.

Still, he was furious because he had allowed the woman to wound him like an ant being kneaded by a finger.....

He was also furious because he had been inferior in her presence. Furious because he had lost his sense of self-respect.....

20 days had passed since that episode!

Everywhere he went was a barren wasteland that stretched as far as ten thousand li. If it were 20 days in the real life, eight years had passed in the Realm of the Violet Jade Immortal.

Qing Shui had conveniently achieved full control over his powers days ago. Yet, he couldn't reach a breakthrough for any of his techniques. Based on his current cultivation realm, he would require some time and the right opportunity to achieve any kind of breakthrough. Without such an opportunity, Qing Shui might not be able to reach a breakthrough even if he were given an additional 1,000 years to cultivate. The path of cultivation was a difficult road to walk on.

For Martial Saint warriors, eight years was a short amount of time compared to their lifespan of a thousand years.

The Diamond Gigantic Elephant had gained an extra 1000 countries of strength and Qing Shui had gained an extra 200 countries of strength from the progress of his cultivation. His overall ability had a slight upgrade as well.

Qing Shui could see the border of Central Continent in the horizon. It had taken about a month to finally reach the Central Continent, even with his current speed.

He had always thought he was qualified to enter the circle of powerful clans, but it turned out he was dreadfully wrong. Qing Shui's current power was still far from reaching the standard of the most powerful clans in the world, let alone that of the woman in the crystal coffin. He recalled the mysterious Tantai Clan in the Southern Viewing Continent, and that woman he had met before – Tantai Xuan. If he were to compare his powers to hers, he would lose, despite her being weaker than the woman in the crystal coffin. When he had seen Tantai Xuan last time, the World Cleansing Demonic Lotus had been nowhere to be seen.

AST 827 – The City Of Adventurers, Heavenly Beast City, Black Obsidian

The Central Continent!

Today was the third day since he had arrived to the Central Continent, yet he still hadn't managed to visit the Qianyi Clan, the Nian Clan, the Di Clan or Duanmu Clan. He didn't want to disturb them, so he kept quiet about his arrival.

Qing Shui seemed relaxed as he continued to stroll around the Central Continent during the day and train every night in the Realm of the Violet Jade Immortal. He had so much money that he would never run out even if he bought a lot of items.

When he had come last time, he had only seen the tip of the iceberg of the whole Central Continent. Qing Shui had already been to a number of cities since his arrival. He would take a day to visit each city and travel to the next the day after, moving from the west to the east in a straight path.

If he were on a tight schedule, it wouldn't take too long for Qing Shui to navigate an entire continent in a short amount of time. On this trip however, he had been travelling around the continent leisurely, touring scenic landscapes and sightseeing.

The Central Continent was the heart of the World of the Nine Continents, the most prosperous continent where martial warriors would gather and the flow of traffic would never stop. The flourishing scenery of the Central Continent was inconceivable.

Qing Shui had been enjoying his life these past few days. Ever since he had started training to improve his abilities, he hadn't had much time to enjoy his life – every day seemed to be a struggle to increase cultivation as fast as possible. So when he got the chance to finally enjoy his life, he felt extremely at ease, as if life felt more substantial than before.

In his past life, Qing Shui had been born the son of a farmer. His life in that family was bearable – the hardest work he had done was a bit of farm work, which was part of the working life experience. After that, he had gone to college to further his studies, but in the end, he hadn't been able to truly enjoy his life either.

Even when he had arrived to the World of the Nine Continents, he had been rushing about constantly, which meant that he hadn't truly enjoyed his life for a second. There had been some setbacks during his cultivation, but he was able to overcome them by constantly pushing forward. As a result, resting was more or less non-existent throughout his life.

Saving one life would always be better than building a pagoda!

Good deeds could lead to the accumulation of virtue!

Qing Shui had never believed in those things, but he had no choice but to accept the truth. Everything that happened had a cause and an effect. Sometimes, occurrences would depend on a person's beliefs, which were never a bad thing to have. Evildoers would always get what they deserved in the end, and those with

good hearts would always be rewarded for their good deeds.

Human beings were known to be selfish creatures – under normal circumstances, no one would willingly take on the burden of others. In actuality, it was quite difficult to differentiate between good people and bad people in this world.

For example, a group of young gang members might be hitting an old woman and a young child violently. Any passers-by would sympathize with the victims and become furious at the uncivilized youngsters. They might see the old woman and the young child as beggars trying to scavenge for necessities in the cold winter while wearing thin clothes, or they might see two disabled individuals..... In any case, most people would harbor sympathy for the old woman and the child, an example of when the good nature of human beings would show.

But sometimes, selfishness would stream into their minds, influencing them to show the bad side of human nature – some people were inherently greedy by nature.

With bad people in the world, there must exist good people to oppose them. The world was a fascinating place where anything strange could happen yet everything had a reason for its existence.

Qing Shui had done some good deeds before, and he felt quite satisfied about his accomplishments. They were the kind of experiences in life that he could consolidate into his cultivation. He had a theory that the advancement of his skills – such as the Nature Energy or State of Immovable as Mountains of invincible aura – might have a correlation to his experiences in life.

The City of Adventurers!

Heavenly Beast City!

This was the city where adventurers were known to gather – the Heavenly Beast City! Qing Shui had arrived in this city half a month ago. It was here that he found that there were some unusual organizations in the World of the Nine Continents.

These organizations didn't seem to fit into the 'sect' or the 'aristocrat clan' categories. However, some super aristocratic clans and sects seemed to have control over these organizations due to their supreme influence and power in this world.

These organizations consisted of merchant associations, guilds for adventurers, auction houses, and related groups. Even though they seemed ordinary, their influence should not be underestimated. For example, a merchant association could be formed by a number of merchants affiliated with one another. One could argue that they were more or less controlled by an alliance of family clans, but they were definitely not from the aristocratic clans.

An auction house was practically a large retail site where people could auction peculiar valuables or rare commodities to wealthy buyers. Large auction houses could organize more than one auction a day. The auction house would impose a fixed administration fee for each item placed up for auction.

The vast city had a huge population and boundless opportunities where people would support each other. Even though the owner of an item was required to pay a fixed amount of administration fee to the auction house, he would be able to receive a larger sum of money from the auctioned item regardless.

Of course, the other way to sell off valuables would be to directly sell them to the auction house. However, in most cases, the amount of money the owner would receive would be less than that from organizing a proper auction. For items of tremendous value, the auction house would normally advertise the auction event a few days prior to the actual day, one of the advantages of the large population. Doing so would bring a more positive response to the hype of the auction.

Those who could afford to open a highly profitable business such as an auction house would not be a commoner. Rather, they all had a powerful influence behind their back as support. In most circumstances, these businessmen would not consider themselves to be a part of the aristocratic clans. As with all things, there were still a few exceptions.

The Adventurer Guild, on the other hand, was started by a group of adventurers who were passionate about risking their lives for glory and wealth. Their base was the guild itself, so anyone could to submit a mission requesting specific things they required, like for example a fresh set of Tiger Bones.

The requester would typically go to the market first to search for materials that they needed. If the materials were not fresh or not to their liking, they would then go to the Adventurer Guild to post

their request with a promised offer of monetary reward after paying a deposit for collateral purposes. If the request could not be completed within a set amount of time, then it would be taken down automatically. The same would apply to the request that had been completed successfully, in order to create space for new requests.

If the mission was a success, the requester would go back to the guild, collect their requested items and pay the reward. After that was done, the requester would be able to take back their deposit money from the guild. However, if the requester failed to collect the deposits in time, then the deposit money would be given to the adventurer who had completed the quest as extra compensation for their effort.

Adventurers should not be looked down upon. Most martial warriors who had reached adulthood would apply as an adventurer at their local Adventurer Guild. Every city would have at least a few adventurers, and they could take on missions as long as they had the adventurer permit or certificate. Moreover, most would not accept the missions that had been taken by other adventurers out of respect to the whole community.

Just like a quest for fresh Tiger Bones – one adventurer alone would be able to finish the quest without problems. If more than one were to take on the quest, it would only serve to complicate things.

However, in some cases, there would be a few missions that could be taken by more than one adventurer. Of course, those who could finish the mission the earliest would be able to receive the reward

first. Others who failed to finish the mission early would naturally get nothing. Most importantly, the mission must state all the conditions clearly beforehand, so that adventurers would be given the time to consider before making their decision.

Adventurers were also allowed to submit the requested item to the requester if they already had it available in their inventory and receive the reward directly.

Like most guilds, adventurers would be tested on their skills and categorized by rank. The higher the rank, the more difficult their tasks would be. However, there would be an abundance of benefits for adventurers who had reached the higher ranks – for example, they would be allowed to collect a payroll from the Adventurer Guild. In a sense, those who were powerful and more highly ranked would never run out of money. Naturally, their tasks would become progressively more difficult. They would be the best choice for requesters who had quests that required someone of extraordinary power to handle them, so normal ranking adventurers would never be allowed to take them.

Advancing in rank for an adventurer was surprisingly easy. If a low ranking adventurer was able to finish a high ranking mission, then he would be allowed to change his rank based on the success of said mission.

The application for the Adventurer Ranking Certificate was easy as well. The certificate title would be associated with the adventurer's cultivation base – Houtian Adventurer, Xiantian Adventurer, Martial King Adventurer, Martial Saint Adventurer, and so forth.

Martial Saint Adventurers were rare in most cases. They would be recruited heavily as long as they showed their capability as a Martial Saint. Those who could use their skills to fight and show their ability to refine medicines would be offered a highly rewarded mission. After all, Martial Saints would be in the spotlight no matter where they went.

Of course, there would be a number of powerful warriors and private adventurers gathered in the Adventurer Guild to receive missions. One could say that they were the guild's main supporters as well.

“Those above Grade Ten Xiantian who can kill Rock Bears at Jolly Mountain, please report here. We still need three people.” A burly man nearby called out for recruitments.

“Those who seek a mission to find the Eight Star Herb in the White Cloud Mountain, please come here. Rewards will be given accordingly to anyone who can find it. Only those above Xiantian are allowed to take this mission.”

.....

To be honest, this was the first time Qing Shui had stepped into an Adventurer Guild, which naturally also meant that he didn't have an Adventurer Ranking Certificate. However, he could get one through a performance appraisal from any Adventurer Guild by measuring his strength. It was the only way to prove himself in order to acquire an official certificate from the guild.

The first time he entered the hall of the Adventurer Guild, he felt astonished. The hall was wide, stretching about 100 meters from side to side. A series of giant stone pillars stood in the middle of the hall, supporting the weight of the building.

Both male and female clerks wearing guild uniforms stood behind a circular platform with desks. The hall was a mess, as there were many people lining up for each desk, while more idled around outside the lines.

Qing Shui took a closer look and noticed that the desks had signs on them – Requisition for Elementary Level Mission, Requisition for Intermediate Level Mission, Requisition for Expert Level Mission, Procurement Section..... There were too many to look at. The crowds in those lines were unbelievable.

Application for the Adventurer Ranking Certificate.

Qing Shui noticed the line for this section was quite short – there were about three to five people standing in line. He chuckled for a while before joining the queue. Behind the desk was a friendly looking middle-aged man sitting on a chair as he continued to process the applications.

“Good day. I would like to apply for the Adventurer Ranking Certificate.” Qing Shui made a polite request when it was his turn to speak at the desk.

“Please proceed inside. There will be an attendant to process that

for you.” The middle-aged man smiled as he pointed towards his left. There was a hallway that he could enter by passing through the stone platform.

Qing Shui gave a polite smile and nodded as a gesture of gratitude. Then he walked inside the hallway towards a spacious area as wide as a large garden. There were a lot of facilities inside this area, with a number of rooms in each corner. Undoubtedly, there were many attendants running about to serve the needs of the applicants.

“Sir, what can I help you with?” Not long after Qing Shui entered the area, a young man walked towards him and asked in a courteous manner.

“I want to apply for the Adventurer Ranking Certificate.”

“This way, sir.”

Qing Shui followed the young male attendant, perhaps also an adventurer of the guild, through a long hallway before they arrived at a room that seemed to be yet another big hall, albeit a little bit smaller.

There was a crowd inside the hall. Some seemed new like Qing Shui, while others were already adventurers who came with the sole purpose of updating their Adventurer Ranking Certificate.

“Master, this gentleman wishes to apply for the Adventurer

Ranking Certificate.” The male attendant greeted an old man with respect.

“Alright!” The old man replied as the male attendant bowed before he left.

Qing Shui observed the old man, who was wearing a grey robe. He had a pair of clear eyes and a full head of grizzled white hair that hung down from his temples. He seemed amiable and kind, especially with the gentle smile on his face.

“Young chap, come over here.” The old man smiled and gestured Qing Shui to follow him.

Qing Shui nodded and followed the old man towards a giant black rock.

The rock was about four meters tall and eight meters wide, with an asymmetrical oval shape. The surface of the rock seemed to have scars left by various kinds of weapons. There were faint marks of palmprints and footprints as well.

This was the Black Obsidian, known to be very hard and solid. Most importantly, the Black Obsidian had an ability to self-regenerate. It could also be used as a material to forge weapons and armors. However, after taking a closer look at the Black Obsidian, it seemed to be a rock of poor quality. Nonetheless, it would suffice as an alternative to assess the strength of a martial warrior. Most people would use Black Obsidian to test their abilities regardless.

“Young chap, pick a weapon from the stash over there. As long as you can leave a mark on this rock, you will officially become an adventurer.” The old man smiled as he pointed to the Black Obsidian and the pile of weapons beside the rock.

AST 828 – Cloud Adventurer Guild, Heading For Tiger Gorge Mountain

There was a weapon's rack filled with various weapons on the side which included the saber, spear, sword, staff, battle axe, hatchet, scythe, dagger, and hammer. There were even various gloves and even claws.

Qing Shui was aware of how the Black Obsidian could measure one's level. If a person could leave behind a mark, it would mean that he was at Peak Houtian cultivator and if he could leave a mark that was one inch deep, he would be a Xiantian cultivator. Peak Xiantian cultivators could leave a mark that was three inch deep; elementary Martial Kings could leave a mark that was one foot deep; Peak Martial Kings could leave a mark that was three feet deep; early Martial Saints could break this Black Obsidian which was four meters tall.

Qing Shui looked at the weapons but did not head over. He merely reached out his hand to touch the Black Obsidian then exerted some strength, his entire palm sunk it, creating a hissing sound.

“Sir, is this alright?” Qing Shui smiled and said to the old man.

As he looked at Qing Shui's state, a hint of surprise flashed in the old man's eyes. He stared at the deep and clear palm print that was left behind. Although this was the standard for an Elementary Xiantian level, the old man was sure that this young man had not given it his all. Xiantian cultivators would not be able to do this so easily, even if they were Peak Xiantian cultivators. Most

importantly, the old man could feel a vague feeling of attraction and mysterious powers from this young man.

Although the weapons here were not the best, they were specially made and were suitable to conduct the tests but this young man didn't use them. This was also why the old man found Qing Shui mysterious. However, whether or not the adventurer displayed their full prowess was their own choice and he could not comment on anything. He merely smiled and nodded, then led Qing Shui to handle the administrative matters.

Xiantian cultivator adventurer certification!

Since the other party chose not to give their all, then it must be his choice to not reveal his abilities. Therefore, the adventurer certification that the old man had given Qing Shui was for the Xiantian level.

“Lad, have you thought of entering our Cloud Adventurer Guild?” After settling the administration for Qing Shui, the old man asked casually.

As he heard the old man's question, Qing Shui thought of the current situation across the world. Almost every city had an adventurer guild but these guilds did not have any headquarters as they were too big and no one could link them together. If it was within a city, there would still be a way to facilitate for the teamwork and join forces to deal with other adventurer guilds.

The competition between adventurer guilds were very intense

and there were usually many adventurer guilds in a city, just like how it was for clans. They would continue to compete while they worked together or even asked the assistance of their friends to join forces to defeat their competitors. Adventurer guilds who were weak would be easily crushed.

“I haven’t thought about it yet. If I were to join an adventurer guild one day, I’ll definitely join Cloud Adventurer Guild.”

Qing Shui was very certain about this, because he didn’t had any plan to join an organization like an adventurer guild. Since the administration were completed, Qing Shui prepared to take his leave. The old man sent him off.

Once he stepped out the door, Qing Shui saw a silhouette from the corner of his eyes as it entered a building far away. He felt that the silhouette was very familiar but it had disappeared in a flash, thus, he did not give much thought into it.

It was a lady.

However, thinking about it, how could there be anyone that he could recognize in the Heavenly Beast City? Therefore, he didn’t pay much heed and he head back towards the hall once again with a smile .

The place was very messy, with many people shouting out to look for helpers for the missions they had taken up. However, not far away, there were a few people who weren’t shouting. They only held up a sign on which a few words were written.

“Looking for people to head to the Tiger Gorge Mountain!”

If he was someone new to the place, Qing Shui would definitely not know what kind of place the Tiger Gorge Mountain was. But now, he was aware and was also slightly interested in it. The Tiger Gorge Mountain was quite far from the other cities, with wilderness on one side. However, the wilderness was the safest while the other three directions were all filled with danger.

On the north side of the Heavenly Beast City was a huge and towering Tiger Gorge Mountain with stretches of mountains that reached up into the clouds. Not just within the Heavenly Beast City but also within the entire Tiger Roar Country, the Tiger Gorge Mountain was well-known as a dangerous place, especially the deeper areas within it.

The name of Tiger Roar Country came from the Tiger Gorge Mountain. The Tiger Gorge Mountain in the north of the Heavenly Beast City was very large, which spanned out to almost millions of li. Moreover, there were plenty of ferocious beasts as well as venomous worms and snakes. Hence, people who were weak would definitely not dare to enter.

The greater the danger, the greater the returns. Therefore, there were still many people who viewed money to be more important than their lives and would take the risk to go in there. The Tiger Gorge Mountain was filled with various interesting beasts, heavenly and earthly treasures, and precious medicinal herbs that were many times more abundant than any other places. There were many people who would be willing to die for riches and thus,

countless people would enter everyday. There were many who would go missing but there would also be rumors of people who became rich overnight or acquired a heavenly and earthly treasures which made their cultivation level to increase by leaps and bounds.

What Qing Shui needed now were medicinal herbs, especially a Sky Penetrating Grass which was 5,000 years old or older. Therefore, after he had arrived to the Central Continent, he would head over as long as there was a chance for it to be found in certain places.

He noticed a few people that were heading for the Tiger Gorge Mountain. As he thought of how he was unfamiliar with the area, he decided to head there with other people as he still wanted to live and experience life.

As Qing Shui headed over, he started to assess them. The group had five people, three men and two ladies. One of the men was in his middle-age while the other two appeared to be in their thirties, all of them were quite good looking. The two ladies should also be in their thirties. One of them wore a Knight attire, her beautiful long hair tied up with a red string. Her eyes were especially bright, her upright nose and slightly curled lips gave the feeling of inhibition. She was an attractive lady who was both beautiful and appeared to have a strong character, with a curvy figure and a height that matches most guys.

The other lady was different. She wore a light blue pleated dress, her long black hair draping down. She did not have any strong features but was still a beauty with a gentle and quiet disposition.

However, Qing Shui felt that she was slightly inferior to the previous lady.

“Can I join?” Qing Shui went over and asked the middle-aged man.

Qing Shui did not know the reason they were heading to the Tiger Gorge Mountain, nor did he have the impulse to ask them. He just had the urge to enter the Tiger Gorge Mountain and did not have any special motives.

They had already noticed him when Qing Shui was walking over. However, after he finished his question, they were all stunned. Ordinary people would first ask what mission they were taking and assess to see if it was suitable before they ask if they could join.

The middle-aged man was stunned for a short moment. He looked at Qing Shui, as if he had some hesitation.

“Uncle Gang, I feel that this lad is quite good. Why don’t we let him join us?” The lady wearing a Knight attire smiled and said.

After the lady finished her words, the other young men looked at Qing Shui curiously before he looked back at the lady. A few others who had asked earlier were all rejected by her. One of them were even a Grade Ten Martial King. However, why did she not even ask for this guy’s cultivation level? Could it be because he was good looking?

“Since lass Lingyun has said it, then let’s go.” The middle-aged man smiled and said.

Qing Shui was stunned. He didn’t expect this to be so easy. They didn’t even ask the reason he was heading to the Tiger Gorge Mountain or ask for his cultivation level. The reason he didn’t ask any questions was because he could estimate their cultivation level, but to them, he should appear to be a Peak Xiantian cultivator.

“Lad, my name is Qi Gang.” The man took a step forward and said.

He then pointed to the lady wearing a Knight attire and said, “She is Long Lingyun, and she is Qian Mo, a summoner The other two are brothers, the elder brother is Cui Hao and the younger brother is Cui Dang.”

“Nice to meet you. I’m Qing Shui.” Qing Shui smiled and greeted them.

Qi Gang was the oldest and strongest, he was an early Martial Saint. Qing Shui had been in the Central Continent for quite a while but the only Martial Saints he had encountered were from this group. There were two of them. The other one was Long Lingyun, who was also an early Martial Saint.

The weakest among them were only at Martial King level. All of them were around Grade Five Martial King.

“Brother Qing Shui, I wonder what level you’re at. Do you mind sharing with us?” The elder brother, Cui Hao, asked.

Qing Shui took out his adventurer certification which stated that he was a Xiantian cultivator adventurer.

“So you’re a Xiantian cultivator. This time around, we’re heading slightly deeper into the Tiger Gorge Mountain to explore and train ourselves, we’ve randomly picked up a few missions which require us to collect medicinal herbs and hunt down demonic beasts. It’s very dangerous for Xiantian cultivators to enter.” The younger brother Cui Dang smiled and said. However, there was a hint of contempt in his smile.

“Haha, thank you for your concern. My battle prowess is still acceptable and so is my survival skills in the wilderness.” Qing Shui didn’t feel anything when faced with the brothers’ challenge. To him, these two were merely two jumping monkeys.

“Alright, Cui Hao, Cui Dang, let’s go on our way.” Long Lingyun interrupted the two brothers who wanted to continue.

After she said that, Long Lingyun took the lead to head out while the others followed her.

When they had reached outside, Long Lingyun called out her own demonic beast. It was a Peak Martial King Silver Horned Eagle which was about 15 to 16 meters big. Qi Gang also called out a flying beast, it was a Two-Headed Flying Wolf which was a Grade Eight Martial King.

Qi Gang and the two brothers went up the Two-Headed Flying Wolf. Just when Qing Shui waited for Qi Gang to bring him up, Long Lingyun spoke up, "There's already three of them. You can just join elder sister."

Qing Shui wanted to say that he would just squeeze in with them when he saw the fury in the Cui brothers' eyes. He thanked Long Lingyun and was pulled up onto the Silver Horned Eagle.

Long Lingyun pulled Qing Shui up with one hand and Qian Mo with the other. As Qing Shui kept his abilities concealed, he could only ask the other's help to bring him up. Only Martial Saints had the ability to fly.

Qing Shui was actually quite curious about this lady who called herself elder sister. To think that she was already an early Martial Saint at such a young age. He had come across many people in the Central Continent but this was the only time he had seen a Martial Saint.

This lady gave him the feeling that she was not an ordinary person. Although she appeared to be very young, many people's age could not be discerned by the eyes alone.

"Do you guys go on adventures often?" Qing Shui stood on the Silver Horned Eagle and asked with a smile.

Although the sound of the wind was strong, their voices could still be clearly heard.

“We’ve only met these few days. The Cui Brothers are more familiar with the area and it’ll save us some time.” Long Lingyun said and smiled as she looked at Qing Shui.

“Those two brothers seem to like the two of you.” Qing Shui smiled and said before he stared at Long Lingyun.

AST 829 – The Weird Long Lingyun, Cui Brothers

“Those two brothers seem to like the two of you.” Qing Shui smiled and said before looking at Long Lingyun.

He didn't mean anything when he said this, he just wanted to do so. Now, Qing Shui wanted to live his life. Since he had hidden his cultivation level, he wanted to appreciate and live a different life. He didn't wish to restrict himself so much. Although it was hard for him to change his character to allow him to live a different life, he was willing to give it a go.

“Oh? How do you know that they like me?” Long Lingyun smiled and asked, as she looked at Qing Shui teasingly.

“When you asked me to join you earlier, that pair of brother couldn't help but want to kill me. Moreover, they've been secretly throwing glances at you, giving the expression that they couldn't wait to devour you.” Qing Shui said, as he looked toward the other group and smiled.

“Why are you telling me this? You like me as well?” Long Lingyun smiled and said as she looked at this strange man that gave her a strange feeling when she first saw him.

She could not tell what his age was. He appeared to be very young but that pair of eyes seemed to be more weary of the world than Uncle Gang. He was very handsome but people would be easily drawn in by his charms instead. He gave out a deadly attraction

that was indescribable.

Her intuition told her that this guy was not a weakling. Although she could sense that his cultivation was only at Xiantian level, she trusted her intuition more. This was the first time she was curious about a young man.

“I have someone I like.” To the lady’s teasing, Qing Shui smiled casually. Although she was clearly a beauty, he was not interested in a ‘narcissistic’ lady like her, who would ask if he likes her when they had only just met. To be honest, he was aware that she was just teasing him but he still felt that she was a bit narcissistic.

If Long Lingyun were to know what Qing Shui was thinking, she would definitely go crazy with anger.

“The ladies you like must be very beautiful!” Long Lingyun smiled and said.

Qian Mo smiled as she watched the conversation between Long Lingyun and Qing Shui. She didn’t join in but just watched them quietly from the side.

“Mmm, very beautiful!” Qing Shui smiled and said.

“More so than me?” Long Lingyun smiled and continued to ask.

“More so than you!” Qing Shui smiled and said.

“Hmph, women are very petty. Do you believe that I’ll toss you down from here?” Although Long Lingyun said this, she still said it in a happy manner.

“I believe!”

“You don’t know how to go along with the conversation, it’s no fun. Do you know who’s the most beautiful lady in the Heavenly Beast City?” Long Lingyun smiled and ask Qing Shui. However, he kept feeling that there was a hint of teasing behind that smile.

“I don’t know, neither do I wish to know.” Although he sounded stiff, he still said politely.

Women are very weird creatures. The more one wanted to ask something, the more she won’t say it but if one doesn’t wish to hear it, the more she would say it. If you were to ask her the reason, she probably wouldn’t be able to explain it either.

“This lady is from the Cloud Adventurer Guild, and her name is [Yunduan](#). It’s a pity that she’s a lady who had led a tough life. Her grandfather is no longer around and the Cloud Adventurer Guild is facing the peril of being taken over by other adventurer guilds. In order to protect the Cloud Adventurer Guild, she chose to yield to the Tiger’s Might Adventurer Guild.” Long Lingyun sighed and said.

The chinese words that form the name ‘Yunduan’ translates to cloud. The author had used the same characters for both the guild and the mentioned lady.

Qing Shui knew about the Tiger's Might Adventurer Guild. Although his time in the Heavenly Beast City had not been long, this city was controlled by this particular guild and in the Heavenly Beast City, even aristocrat clans were not as powerful as adventurer guilds.

The Tiger's Might Adventurer Guild was the strongest adventurer guild in the Heavenly Beast City. It was a reasonable to choose this guild. He turned around to look at Long Lingyun, confused as why this lady said these to him.

When she saw Qing Shui's gaze, she smiled and continue, "For such a beautiful lady to give herself to an old man. She really has a tragic life."

"Many of such things happen everyday." Qing Shui chuckled and said.

"You really are a person without any sympathy." Long Lingyun chided Qing Shui.

"This is her fate, her choice. She has also gotten what she had wanted. Why do I need to sympathize with her?" Qing Shui looked at her.

"You're a guy without any sympathy. Let's stop talking about it. Right, why are you heading to the Tiger Gorge Mountain?" Long Lingyun didn't bother on the topic for too long.

“I’m only going there to get some experience, as well as to get some medicinal herbs.” Qing Shui had his answer ready.

.....

Very soon, they arrived at the Tiger Gorge Mountain. They flew less than 500 meters in and then landed on an empty spot.

After he had spoken with Long Lingyun, Qing Shui learnt that they were looking for a type of Landai Grass and to kill a Peak Martial King Ironback Azure Bear.

Killing the Ironback Azure Bear was the Cui Brothers’ mission but they needed Long Lingyun’s and Qi Gang’s help to kill it. The search for the Landai Grass was Long Lingyun’s, Qian Mo’s and Qi Gang’s mission but the Cui Brothers mentioned that it could be found anywhere.

The group slowly headed deeper into the Tiger Gorge Mountain, as they tried their best to be careful on the way, hoping to not come across with demonic beast groups. If they came in large numbers, it would be a pain to kill them.

The Cui Brothers carefully scouted around while they lead the way. If Long Lingyun and Qi Gang wasn’t here, they would not have accepted the mission. The Ironback Azure Bear, a Peak Martial King, was not something they could deal with now.

Another reason was that the brothers like Long Lingyun but they knew that they were not a good match for her. However, once a person was smitten, he would not care about anything and just commit the craziest act.

Wu!

Wuwuwu...

A huge roar came from the front, followed by a series of cries. Very quickly, a group of Gigantic Forest Wolves appeared, each of them were about four meters in size and had a faint blue color. They looked quite beautiful but one would rather go against a single tiger than to pit against a group of wolves.

Moreover, the level of these wolves were all at Martial King, ranging from elementary Martial King to Peak Martial King. There were at least 500 of them and the spread of blue color with shiny bright eyes bring a chill.

The group's countenances had changed, especially the Cui Brothers. It was because many of the wolves here could kill them easily. Although there were two elementary Martial Saints in their group, if they were not able to extend their help then the Cui Brothers would be in great trouble.

Just then, a flock of Corrosion Turtledoves appeared in the air, they let out piercing cries and they circled in the air as they refused to leave. This cause the group to lose any thoughts about escaping on their flying beasts.

Wolves specialized in speed and they closed in very quickly. The Cui Brothers' countenance also grew increasingly pale. However, Long Lingyun and Qi Gang showed no changes to their expressions.

“Go over there. Everyone lay against the cliff walls. At least we won't be attacked from the back.” Qi Gang quickly told everyone.

No one had any objections. At that moment, no one had any better idea.

When the group arrived at the cliff walls, the group of wolves were already within a 100 meter radius. Their rampaging disposition were very powerful and a huge stench flowed toward them, which had made the group to feel dizzy. Their bright green eyes gleamed while they kept salivating with their mouths opened.

At that moment, a demonic beast appeared before Qian Mo with a wave of her hand. She then waved her hand again and called out another beast, stopping only after the third demonic beast had appeared.

One of them was a Armored Beast which was close to three meters in length and appeared to be extremely tough, as if it was wearing a silver colored armor. It was decently proportioned and should be quite agile.

Another one was a Sword Tiger which was also three meters in length but less than one meter in height. It appeared as if it was

stuck to the ground, with sharp fangs and claws. It was also an agility type beast and was a Peak Martial King.

The last one was a Ice Snake which was four meters long, with a thickness that was akin to the diameter of the top of a bowl. It was dark blue in color, the lower half of its body was coiled up while the first half of the body kept stretching out and recoiling. It gave out a hissing sound and occasionally breathed out a hint of blue colored chilly air.

“Everyone, work together and don’t panic.” Long Lingyun subconsciously stood before Qing Shui and said.

Qing Shui didn’t know what to feel. He didn’t believe that this lady likes him from just their first encounter. Could it be that he looked like her younger brother?

The Cui Brothers once again threw an aggrieved glance toward Qing Shui. They had brought along this additional burden with them today. Otherwise, with Long Lingyun’s and Qi Gang’s help, all of them would be able to leave easily.

Not only did they had hatred for Qing Shui, they also threw a look at Long Lingyun. Looking at that curvy figure, they thought to themselves, “If we can get pass this trial, I’ll make sure that I’ll get to have my way with you.”

Long Lingyun took out a thin longsword. It was very thin and at first glance, it looked just like a tree branch. Qi Gang took out a pair of huge hammers, each of them weighing about 800 jin.

Wuwu...

Suddenly, one of the wolves pounced toward Qian Mo. It was very agile, bringing about a sharp and strong wind. It leaped up over five meters, as it stretched out its limbs slightly. Suddenly, with a leap, the Armored Beast stopped the Gigantic Forest Wolves which was in mid-air. Just then, the Sword Tiger pounced over like a snake. Its weirdly shaped body contained a terrifying speed and attacked the Gigantic Forest Wolves by the waist, then it quickly retreated. The Gigantic Forest Wolves's stomach was torn open, its waist broken and its throat was torn apart. A wolf was a creature with a head as tough as bronze, a strong tail that was like a metal and a body that was weak like tofu.

It was not a battle of an equivalent level. Moreover, they had good teamwork, with the Armored Beast who had a strong resistance while the Sword Tiger had a strong attack and the Ice Snake could reduce speed.

With one wolf taken down, the bloody nature of the pack of wolves caused them to dashed forth without any care. Even the Corrosion Turtledoves in the air would occasionally come down to pick up a wolf corpse.

Long Lingyun's thin sword was vicious, each attack fatal as she attacked only at their throats. However, her efficiency was lowered as she had to take care of Qing Shui and Qian Mo.

The area in which the group battled was very small, therefore,

they were able to fend off the wolves with just Long Lingyun and Qi Gang alone. After all, the difference between elementary Martial Saint and Martial King was very big, even if the latter was a Peak Martial King. It was only that the pack of wolves were great in numbers.

What the Cui Brothers were worried about was that Long Lingyun and Qi Gang might make any mistakes.

Boom!

Another Gigantic Forest Wolves's head was smashed. Now, the attacks from the pack of wolves was not as fierce as before. The death of just one wolf alone was able to agitate their brutality but when half of them had been killed, they would have second thoughts about attacking.

Wuwu!

Finally, a loud howl came from the back of the wolves pack and all of them turned to leave. Qing Shui could see that there was a wolf king hidden in a distance.

It was a Gargantuan Wolf that was at least twice as big than the Gigantic Forest Wolves, its blue colored fur released a pure but faint glow. The Gargantuan Wolf quickly disappeared.

A few days later, they entered 100 li into the Tiger Gorge Mountain!

Tiger Stream Valley !

“You guys take a break first, we’ll go hunt for food.” The Cui Brothers smiled and said to the others before they left.

For the past few days, they had been in charge of the food since their culinary skills were not bad. It was just that this time, Qing Shui felt that their footsteps and breathing were unstable. They were clearly slightly agitated.

AST 830 – Bone Softening Powder, Hu Yuanqing

Qing Shui wasn't particularly concerned when the Cui brothers left. They weren't strong enough to cause him any kind of trouble, so he didn't have anything to worry about.

Tiger Stream Valley!

This area was surrounded by steep, mountain rock walls and there was only one exit that lead to the outside world. The place seemed like a giant open-air premise but the air felt a bit suffocating in it.

The grasses on the ground were dense which filled the entire valley with a pleasant smell of fresh green grass. It had been an exhausting and speedy journey for the past few days, so this change of beautiful scenery was a good chance to sit back and relax for a while.

Qing Shui glanced at Long Lingyun and Qi Gang – they appeared to be as the same as before even after what they had been through. Just then, he wondered what kind of impressions they had on the Cui brothers but he figured that they kept the brothers around because they were still useful. The reason he was curious was because awhile ago, the brothers looked down on his abilities.

“Qing Shui, are you selling the herb you required or are you collecting it for a mission? Or maybe you are collecting the herb to refine medicine?” When Long Lingyun finally had some spare

time, she sat beside Qing Shui with a smile and asked him questions.

“I am going to use the herb to refine medicine.” Qing Shui told the truth. Lying was unnecessary at this point.

“So you are an alchemist.” Long Lingyun wasn’t surprised. Even though alchemists were widely respected by the public, most Xiantian alchemists wouldn’t be highly regarded in the eyes of Martial Saint warriors. However, no one would dare to underestimate them just in case a Xiantian alchemists had some secret recipes that could overlook most powerful recipes. If a Xiantian alchemist had managed to refine such medicinal pills, then the Martial Saints could benefit hugely from the alchemist’s effort.

So in most circumstances, any alchemists – including Xiantian alchemists – would be respected regardless. Alchemists were strangely known to be popular with both the public and martial warriors.

“I think so!” Qing Shui said in a flat tone as he smiled at Long Lingyun.

“What do you mean ‘I think so’? It’s either a yes or a no.” Long Lingyun chided angrily.

“It’s a yes.” Qing Shui replied.

“What kind of medicinal herb you need? Tell me, maybe I can help you find it. And if I can’t, then you can try the Cloud Auction House to ask for it. Oh right, why didn’t you go to the Cloud Auction House to post it as a mission?” Long Lingyun spoke in a moderate pace, yet with some sort of rhythm. She had a mellow voice that sounded pleasant.

“That is an option. Well, what I need is a Sky Penetrating Grass of more than 5,000 years old.” Qing Shui chuckled.

“5,000 years above.....” Long Lingyun skipped the part about the herb’s name when she heard the words ‘5,000 years’. Whatever herb it was, 5,000 years was a ridiculously long time.

Qing Shui looked at the shocked expression on Long Lingyun’s face. Even Qi Gang and Qian Mo were shocked at well. Despite not being an alchemist themselves, they still had a bit of knowledge about medicinal herbs, especially when it came down to the age of the herbs. Those 5,000 years old herbs were extremely valuable, so they knew these precious herbs were not something that a Xiantian alchemist could use to concoct a medicinal pill with.

“Can you even use a 5,000 years old herb to concoct medicinal pills?” Long Lingyun glistened with curiosity when she asked Qing Shui.

“I think I can. But I haven’t use it before.” Qing Shui replied with a smile.

Long Lingyun pouted her lips and remained silent. Qing Shui’s

words had the ability to get on her nerves easily. She initially thought she had met a low-profile man of superior talent but reality wasn't as straightforward as she had thought.

Just then, the Cui brothers came back with two musk deers that were already skinned and cleaned properly, including the inner organs. They greeted everyone and began to start a fire to roast the deer meat.

Within a few minutes, a fragrant smell of cooked meat travelled through the air. When the meat had turned to a subtle yellow color, the Cui brothers took out some condiments and salt then marinated the meat before they continued the roasting process.

After a while, the meat's fragrance became stronger and richer, which had caused everyone to salivate. However, Qing Shui could sense something odd in the fragrance. His intuition told him that there was something wrong with the roasted meat.

The Cui brothers took the roasted meat and gave them to Long Lingyun and Qian Mo first. Both the ladies picked the lower joint of the legs, while Qi Gang tore off the loin of the meat for himself.

When it was Qing Shui's turn to pick, he chose the two front legs without hesitation and began to eat. When he tasted the meat, he knew something was wrong – it was tasteless and unpalatable, as if something had disturbed its taste. Luckily, Qing Shui's Nature Energy had an extraordinary ability that could release an astonishing energy throughout his body and began to cleanse the odd substance from his system.

The Cui brothers also ate the meat but only after they saw everyone took a bite first. They seemed relieved when they had affirmed that everyone had consumed the meat.

Qing Shui could understand why the Cui brothers were able to consume the tainted meat – they must have consumed some sort of antidote beforehand. Long Lingyun and Qi Gang didn't seem to show any kind of reaction, and Qing Shui was unsure what kind of drug the Cui brothers had used, so he decided to wait patiently and observe the situation closely.

Ultimately, he wasn't worried. The 'poison' inside his body had already been countered by his self-generating Nature Energy. All he had to do now was to observe what the Cui brothers would do next.

After the time to burn an incense stick had passed, Qian Mo decided to wash her hands at a nearby lake. But when she had tried to stand up, she realized her body was devoid of energy as her bones began to feel weak. Then immediately, she dropped to the ground, unable to move her muscles.

“Ah, why do I feel so weak!?” Qian Mo shouted in panic as she laid on the ground. She was the youngest in the group, after all.

Long Lingyun and Qi Gang were startled by Qian Mo's cry and immediately stood up to help her. But they sat back down soon after that, clearly weakened by the poison in the meat. Qing Shui, on the other hand, remained motionless. This drug must be

outrageous if an Elementary Martial Saint was affected as well.

“Hahaha!”

At that moment, Cui Hao let out a roaring laughter. A gloating smile was plastered openly on his face.

“Cui Hao, what did you do to us?” Qi Gang shot a furious look at Cui Hao.

All of their summoned mounts and demonic beasts had been called back instinctively. They felt powerless, unable to lift even a muscle on their body, not even an ounce of energy left to summon their demonic beast to protect them. Alas, it was as if their opponents had intended for this to happen.

Maybe they had waited for this moment to come for the past few days. Today was finally the best moment to strike.

“Do what? What do you think? The Cloud Adventurer Guild will soon unite with the Mighty Tiger Adventurer Guild. Meanwhile, the son of the Mighty Tiger Adventurer Guild’s leader has his eyes on Miss Long and Miss Qian.” said Cui Hao with a nasty smirk.

“You will die sooner or later. So why don’t you let us have some fun with you.” Cui Dang darted his perverted eyes all over Long Lingyun’s body.

“You’re from the Mighty Tiger Adventurer Guild?” Long

Lingyun's face was as pale as a ghost. She gulped down a breath as she asked with a cold tone.

“Heh heh, since it has come to this, then I will tell you. You're right, we are from the Mighty Tiger Adventurer Guild. We have been waiting for this day to come for so long.” the Cui brothers cackled. “You all were highly vigilant when you chose your companions. Yet you chose us because we were weak and possessed a low cultivation base. That's how we got you to be less cautious about us and even allowed us to join the group.”

“I swear I will kill you!” Qi Gang shouted on top of his lungs.

His face was red and fuming with anger as he felt extremely helpless for falling into their calculative trap. He was disappointed in himself for allowing two pathetic trickster to best him. Qi Gang felt like he could vomit a pool of blood if he continued to think about this humiliation by the Cui brothers.

“If you can stand up right now, then I will personally cut out my brain and serve it to you on a plate.” said Cui Hao in a provoking smile at Qi Gang.

Qi Gang let out a loud roar and quickly straightened his body. But as soon as he managed to perform the 'horse stance', he lost his energy and flopped to the ground on his butt. His eyes grew increasingly red with rage and bitterness.

“This isn't a common Bone Softening Powder. Even a low levelled Peak Martial Saint will be weakened to an ordinary feeble

person. You can forget about struggling because this effect will last for 24 hours.” Cui Hao sneered.

Clap clap clap!

Just then, Cui Dang clapped his hands three times.

“Today is a good day.” A clear voice rang out, followed by the appearance of a group of seven people.

Qing Shui cocked his head to observe the group. The leader was an evil-looking man who seemed young but his real age was uncertain. However, he should be more than 50 years old, based on Qing Shui’s intuition.

Behind this man was a handful of young men, each wore an embroidered clothing and a belt adorned with variety of jadea. These young men had a foppish aura on their appearance but they were not as simple as the profligate sons from those supreme sects. They were more snobbish and narcissistic than the ones he had met before. Despite the negative traits, they were all still regarded as a genius in terms of their cultivation. If anything, they should be considered as the real powerful profligate sons, not the other way around.

What caught Qing Shui’s attention were the two old men behind the leader. They have a head full of white hair but their complexion were more energized, unlike those of a typical old man. A strange light flashed in their eyes, which seemingly locked upon Long Lingyun from the moment they had appeared with the

other men.

“Young master Hu, you’ve arrived.” The Cui brothers bowed and greeted in respect.

“You guys did great. Watch from the sidelines. After we are finished, these ladies will be yours. You do know where to go out from here, right?” Young Master Hu snided.

“Yeah, we know. Thank you Young Master Hu!” The Cui brothers gestured with deep gratitude.

Even a fool would be able to tell what they wanted to do from here.

“Back then, the old fool Yun could protect you all. Now that he’s dead, I will show the Cloud Adventurer Guild what I can do and we will see how that woman Yun Duan will react. So what if she’s going to marry into my family? She’s only another woman for my father. The Cloud Adventurer Guild will still merge with our Mighty Tiger Adventurer Guild.” said the evil-looking man as he gazed at Long Lingyun in a towering position.

“Hu Yuanqing, fight me fairly if you have the guts. What kind of man uses such despicable method on his opponents?” Long Lingyun shouted in rage. However, her breath grew short, which had caused her shout to sound slightly muffled.

“Missy, you will know soon enough what kind of man I am. Save

your breath later when you scream for pleasure.” said Hu Yuanqing without a shred of anger in his expression.

“Uncle Yong, Uncle Xie, I know you like them very much. Take them as a gift from me. I hope you like what you see.” said Hu Yuanqing as he turned to face two old men with a smile.

Qing Shui was unsure how strong the Mighty Tiger Adventurer Guild was. The two old men behind Hu Yuanqing seemed to be Peak Martial Saints with the strength of two stars. Judging by their power, they must be basking in the glory of their influence, showered with admiration and respect by the public and members.

Moreover, this Hu Yuanqing was quite the guy. Qing Shui could see an unquenchable thirst in Hu Yuanqing’s eyes when he gazed at Long Lingyun. Even so, he was willing to give her away like an item – Hu Yuanqing was a man of wild ambitions.

“How kind of you. Don’t worry, we know how exceptional you are, which is why we’ve been very supportive of you. Since it’s a gift to us, then it’s impolite to refuse your kindness.” The old man on the left smiled wickedly.

It was an evil smile that could send shivers down a spine, especially for women.

“Young Master Hu, we will show you how it should be done.” The other old man chortled. Both of them walked towards Long Lingyun’s direction and abruptly shredded their clothes into pieces within the first three steps, leaving two Interspatial Silk Sachets

on the ground.

Such generosity – to show everyone their naked body.....

Qing Shui was just beside Long Lingyun, so he was able to see her face turned 50 shades paler when she saw the naked bodies of the two old men. Not a surprise, given that she was a woman after all. Startled, she quickly shut her eyes tightly as the two old men walked closer towards her.

AST 831 – Massacre, Life's Encounter

Qing Shui didn't expect them to be this immoral in front of everyone in broad daylight. For some reason, this reminded him of a similar scenario on a particular island back in his past life.....

The two old men with towering bodies seemed well-built as they continued to walk towards Long Lingyun.

Qi Gang had bloodshot eyes as a stream of blood rolled down from his eyes, similar to how blood was flowing out of his mouth too. Long Lingyun, Qian Mo, and himself were part of the Cloud Adventurer Guild and had been doing missions together for a long time. Long Lingyun and Qian Mo were like his daughters, so how could he not be furious when he was about to witness an immoral act being performed upon them.....

Long Lingyun was terrified, evident by the pale complexion of her face. Her body was shivering, and she clearly didn't want to see the image of two naked old man coming towards her. However, she remained adamant on keeping her head high. If she lowered her head, it would essentially mean that she had surrendered herself. In any case, she had no intention of raising a white flag to her enemies that easily.

She naturally turned her head to face Qing Shui, but as she did so, she was startled. Qing Shui was showing a calm expression on his face, akin to the serenity of calm water.

She then recalled how mysterious this man had seemed from the

beginning. If he were in her shoes right now, he should be scared to death too or even be pleading for his life desperately. But now, he was acting like it wasn't a big deal at all.

“Are you not scared?” asked Long Lingyun. Surprisingly, she became a bit calmer after noticing the undisturbed expression on Qing Shui's face.

“They want you, not me.” Qing Shui smiled. His voice was soft, yet everyone could hear him clearly. However, no one was able to notice the abundance of qi in his voice...

“You, you.. They will still kill you in the end!” Long Lingyun couldn't control her emotions as she spoke with Qing Shui.

“Are you scared then?” Qing Shui let out a slight chuckle as he asked Long Lingyun.

“I'm not scared. But I'm disgusted to the point of being terrified.” Long Lingyun said in a miserable tone as she looked at Qing Shui.

“Well, let this uncle kill them for you, alright?” Qing Shui was calm as he showed her a smile.

“Tch, what uncle? You're still a snotty brat in my eyes.” Long Lingyun pouted her lips and scoffed.

“If you don't call me 'uncle', then I won't kill them.”

Long Lingyun was confused about her situation. There were clearly two naked men trying to rape her right now. Despite that, she somehow had the time to talk to Qing Shui, and she didn't know whether she could entrust her life in his hands or not.

Those old men were both undoubtedly Peak Martial Saints. It would be extremely easy for them to kill her with only a lift of a finger.

“Uncle. Is that good enough for you?” Long Lingyun said loudly with a hint of anticipation in her tone. She realized how excited she was, and it felt quite bizarre.

“Good little niece. Now that I have adopted a niece, I'm feel quite happy. As promised, I will gladly destroy these men for you.” Qing Shui said casually. Then, he turned his head back to the old men who were approximately ten meters away from Long Lingyun.

“Why do you like to show off so much?” Qing Shui shook his head in disappointment and stood up slowly. With one casual fling of his sleeves, a Frosted Iron Ball appeared and shot towards one of the old men. It was impossible to miss as the old men were so close. Furthermore, they were weaker than him in terms of power, as Qing Shui had already improved his strength before.

Pu!

The whole area was silenced. One of the old men was hit in the testicles and the Frosted Iron Ball had mashed his balls into mush.

The other old man who had been blazing his pride just a moment ago immediately shriveled back down. Whether his ‘pride’ could become erect again would be his own problem.

The old men hadn’t even considered Qing Shui and the others as a threat since they had been inflicted with the ‘Bone Softening Powder’. If they hadn’t considered that they would send out a distress call after they were trapped, they wouldn’t have used the ‘Bone Softening Powder’ to drain their strength completely.

Who knew this outcome would occur when the old men had completely let down their guard?

Even so, they were still Peak Martial Saints – they could’ve evaded the attack easily through their intuitive senses.

“AH.....”

It took quite a while before the first old man let out a piercing cry. He slumped to the ground and writhed in intense pain. Drenched in his sweat, the old man clenched his legs as blood profusely flowed out. He couldn’t immediately register where he was wounded, but in a few seconds, his body had been stained with red blood.

It was too sudden, so everyone was stunned for a few moments.

Long Lingyun widened her eyes as she stared dumbfoundedly at the situation. Despite the disgusting torment of the old man, she

couldn't take her eyes off of his suffering. The sudden change of situation was oddly entertaining to watch.

“You two deserve to die!”

Hu Yuanqing abruptly leaped at the Cui brothers and hit them with a dense cold light from his palms. The pitiful Cui brothers cried out in pain and died without knowing why they deserved this kind of death.

Qing Shui didn't feel any grief for the pair of brothers, nor any emotions regarding the current situation. He hadn't really acquainted himself with the troupe emotionally as his sole reason for journeying was to enjoy his life and increase his state of mind. Through this journey, he hoped that he could achieve a breakthrough to the 7th Heavenly Layer of the Ancient Strengthening Technique as soon as possible.

Long Lingyun had no opinions about the current situation either. Anyone, even a man, would have done the same thing as Qing Shui if they met with the same situation. Moreover, they could have been killed anytime, as they were powerless from eating the poisoned food. These scumbags deserved to be killed, as a virtue for themselves and society.

“You are really awesome! How could you lie to us, saying that you were an alchemist?” said Long Lingyun in a pleasant cheerful tone.

“I am an alchemist. Eat this and you will be able to move again.”

Qing Shui quickly threw a few Five Dragon Pellets towards Long Lingyun.

Long Lingyun fetched the pellets and consumed one without hesitation. She seemed to have a hard time putting the pellet in her mouth as she struggled to use her jaw muscles. In the instant after the pellet had travelled to her stomach, she could finally move her body. Overjoyed, she turned towards Qian Mo and Qi Gang and fed them each a pill.

“You brat, prepare to die!”

Suddenly, the old man who was writhing in pain rose up in the air and curled his hands into claw-like shapes to strike Qing Shui. His movements were extremely fast, and the air exploded into a series of booming noises.

Seeing the old man who was still naked rushing towards him, Qing Shui immediately raised his palm and released an attack.

Nine Waves Great Golden Buddha Palm!

Bang bang.....

Without any suspense, the naked old man was instantly killed by the force of the Sixth Wave.

It was a sneak attack at first, but now it was just an all-out war against his opponents. The old man had been a Peak Martial Saint,

yet he was instantly annihilated. Being a Martial Saint was an honor, not a common vegetable in the market to be sold for a measly coin that Qing Shui had made him look like.

“You really are an alchemist. If that’s true, then that’s great.” Long Lingyun said happily to Qing Shui. There was an unspeakable comfort in her tone.

.....

“Hu Yuanqing, since you thought of such a despicable tactic, don’t think for a minute that you will leave here alive.” Long Lingyun became increasingly furious as she thought of Hu Yuanqing’s acts. She then rushed towards Hu Yuanqing, rapier in hand, with the intention to kill.

Hu Yuanqing and the others had already prepared their mounts nearby. With the situation out of hand, they immediately leaped onto their mounts and attempted to escape as quickly as possible.

Qing Shui couldn’t allow them to leave alive, so he shot a number of Frosted Iron Balls towards the men at supersonic speed.

The piercing sound of the incoming Frosted Iron Balls shook them into a state of fright.

After a succession of painful cries, the young men flopped to the group motionlessly.

“Uncle, you are so strong, yet you kept your strength a secret from us. I will get even with you later.” Long Lingyun puffed in anger as she scoffed, despite her not actually being angry at all.

“Quickly, go take care of those men.” Qing Shui was a bit speechless. He had just been teasing her when he asked her to call him ‘uncle’, but now he had to act like one as he urged Long Lingyun to settle her score with the men from Mighty Tiger Adventurer Guild.

Qi Gang, Long Lingyun, and Qian Mo dashed towards their opponents with a rekindled flame of rage. They didn’t hold back on their assault – things had escalated to the point that leaving alive was not an option for those despicable men.

Hu Yuanqing was the son of the Mighty Tiger Adventurer Guild’s leader, as well as a genius. He could theoretically fight back, as his strength was on par with Long Lingyun, but right now he had no desire to fight. Moreover, he had been suddenly thrown into confusion by Long Lingyun’s rage, so he had no idea how to retaliate properly.

The rest of the young men were all Peak Martial Kings. They would eventually advance to become Martial Saints in due time, but that was not meant to be, as none of them could survive when faced with Qi Gang. The disparity of strength between a Martial King and a Martial Saint was too great.

In a blink of an eye, Hu Yuanqing was the only one left standing.

“You cannot kill me. Otherwise, the Mighty Tiger Adventurer Guild will never forgive you.” Hu Yuanqing growled as he kept blocking Long Lingyun’s continuous assaults.

“If we let you go alive, will we survive? Even if I can’t kill you, I’m still going to vent my anger on you.” Long Lingyun shot back, her teeth gritted in rage.

“If I die, Yun Duan will be harassed and tormented by my father. The Mighty Tiger Adventurer Guild will know about today’s incident. Are you going to let my father’s rage ruin the future of the Cloud Adventurer Guild?” Hu Yuanqing fired back at Long Lingyun. He knew she would hesitate when he mentioned Yun Duan from the Cloud Adventurer Guild.

“Uncle Gang, what do you think? If elder sister Yun Duan suffers because of this, everyone in the Cloud Adventurer Guild will suffer the same fate as well.....” Long Lingyun halted her assault and turned to look at Qi Gang.

Qi Gang was indecisive as well. Hu Yuanqing was not a person to talk irresponsibly, and he was still quite influential among the members of the Mighty Tiger Adventurer Guild. Whether or not they should kill him was a difficult decision they had to make right now.

When Long Lingyun saw the hesitation in Qi Gang’s expression, she felt a sense of immense pressure in her chest. When she turned to look at Qing Shui nearby, he was strangely showing a smile at her. It was then she decided to ask him instead.

“Uncle, what do you say, should we kill him?” Long Lingyun faced Qing Shui as she asked the question in a serious tone.

At that moment, a few flying beasts were speeding towards their direction from a distance.

Qing Shui lifted his head up to get a good look at the flying beasts. He had eyesight that was almost as sharp as that of an eagle.

Three Giant Green Geese appeared in his area of vision. The leading Giant Goose was carrying a woman on its back, with the other two geese were each carrying an elderly men. However, when he saw the woman leading the elderly men, he was stunned.

This woman was none other than the familiar silhouette he had seen at the Cloud Adventurer Guild. Qing Shui wasn't shocked because he had seen the familiar silhouette in this place again, rather he was shocked because he knew who she was.

She was Elder Yun from the Feng Clan!

She was a mature, elegant woman, with an exemplary appearance of a true beauty. She had delicate facial features, graceful and poised. This woman didn't give off an aura of coldness, but somehow she felt unapproachable by most people.

The first thing Qing Shui noticed about the woman standing on

the back of the Green Goose was her slender figure and perfectly well-developed chest. This was indeed the remarkable woman that he remembered from a long time ago.

Every part of her body screamed with allure and charisma. Her exquisite eyes were charming and enticing – deadly, even.

Now that he had met her again, he felt that the World of the Nine Continents was a small place. He couldn't quite understand their fateful meeting at this place, and why the leader of the Cloud Adventurer Guild would appear at the Feng Clan in the first place.

He glanced at the elderly men behind her, and noticed that that they were stronger than the two naked old men from earlier. Qing Shui tried to comprehend the current situation one more time, but the more he tried to, the more he became confused.

This was because he hadn't expected to see the woman he had spent a night of lust and affection with appearing in this place. The incident that night had only been due to an exchange of deals between her and Qing Shui.

Fate has a tendency to toy with people's feelings. The fate of meeting her in this place was sealed. Without a second thought, Qing Shui could definitely tell that she was indeed Yun Duan.

Hu Yuanqing wasn't worried when he saw Yun Duan and the two elderly men approaching towards their direction. In fact, he was so happy to see them that he started to straighten his body and stand up proudly, as if he was showing his superiority over them.

“Good to see you, Elder Sister Yun Duan, and Sir Elders!” Long Lingyun greeted Yun Duan and the two elderly men with respect.

“Lingyun, when I heard your group was coming here and that Hu Yuanqing had entered Tiger Stream Valley, I knew something would go wrong. I didn’t think that they would make a move on my Cloud Adventurer Guild even before I married the leader of the Mighty Tiger Adventurer Guild.” Yun Duan sighed with disappointment.

Her voice sounded raspy, but it was somehow strangely attractive and elegant.

AST 832 – What Should Qing Shui Do?

“Sister Yun Duan, you shouldn’t sacrifice your future for the sake of the Cloud Adventurer Guild. Even if you sacrifice your future, as what you have just seen, the outcome might not change.” Long Lingyun walked in front of Yun Duan and said.

Qing Shui had initially thought that Long Lingyun was cool-headed but she paled in comparison with Yun Duan. She lacked a lot more in her temperament and the aura she exuded.

“Future? Hehe, I have been destined to not have that kind of thing since long ago.” Yun Duan slowly said. She only looked at Long Lingyun after she was done talking.

“How can that be? That young man from the Heavenly Beast City, isn’t he in love with you sister? Don’t tell me you don’t fancy any one of them?” Long Lingyun was extremely against the idea of Yun Duan being married to that old geezer from the Mighty Tiger Adventurer Guild.

“Lass Yun. Look, both of them actually died.” An elderly man dressed in a silvery gray robe said in amazement after he saw the two middle-aged men that was killed by Qing Shui.

Yun Duan saw both of them were actually naked, so she didn’t look again after a single glance. But now, she had to force herself to look again. Although she had already expected it, she was still extremely surprised.

“Cai Yong and Xie Shuang were the powerful cultivators from the Mighty Tiger Adventurer Guild and they could be considered as prominent persons. But these two were extremely lecherous and did things without appropriate measure. However, they were still considered as powerful cultivators. I wonder who killed them.”

“Fifth Elder, they were killed by this uncle. He is also the one who have helped us out this time.” Long Lingyun hurriedly introduced Qing Shui when she heard the elderly man’s words.

Qing Shui had been standing at the back. He knew that he’d definitely have to face this woman next. It would be a lie to say that his emotions weren’t stirred up after seeing her again but right now, he didn’t know how to face her.

It was probably fair to say that their fates were deeply entwined for them to be able to meet again here!

“Qing Shui! Is that you?”

An attractive voice that was slightly raspy, yet very pleasant-sounding, travelled to Qing Shui’s ears. And that voice was just right in front of him. A slightly joyful and beautiful face came into his view when he raised his head.

He had been pierced by her sword once before and at that moment, Qing Shui felt that there was really nothing else between them anymore. Even if they meet again, they’d just be strangers to each other. Besides, the chance of meeting each other again was almost next to nothing.

He didn't know when she had left the Heavenly Palace. It had been so many years and she could still recognize him.

Yun Duan's heart was extremely chaotic. She had gone to the Greencloud Continent to gather experience before and was rescued by the Feng Clan when she was in danger. Just like this, she became the elder of the Feng Clan. After that, she didn't want to marry Feng Wuji so she could only make the most helpless choice, thus crossing paths with Qing Shui.

She wasn't a perfect woman and on top of that, her background was quite a mystery. The Feng Clan was not worth to risk for, so he no longer had any intention towards her anymore.

However, that familiar silhouette and that wonderful scene emerged frequently in her mind. She couldn't control replaying the memories in her mind but she knew they would have no chance of meeting ever again in their entire life because he was at the Greencloud Continent and she was at the Central Continent.

Little did she not expect to meet him this way. He had matured quite a lot since then and he also looked a lot more gentle now. Although that face had already lost the childishness that it had before, she still managed to recognize him at the first glance.

"Sister Yun Duan, you know him?" It was Long Lingyun's turn to be surprised.

"He is a friend that I got to know when I was at the Greencloud

Continent. Uncles, Hu Yuanqing cannot stay.” Yun Duan frowned then said to the two elderly men.

“Don’t worry, this old man here is going to clean this up.” The Fifth Elder chuckled and walked towards Hu Yuanqing whose face had already gone pale.

“Hello, Miss Yun Duan.” Qing Shui greeted with a smile.

He already moved on from the past and had stopped dwelling on it. Some events couldn’t be controlled. He had to readjust his attitude and work hard towards achieving the realm of ‘[observing honor and humiliation as flowers that bloomed and withered in the courtyard and disregarding the ever-changing clouds in the skies](#)’.

[TL Note: A chinese rhyming couplet that the meaning that ‘if a person can view honor and disgrace as normal as flowers blooming and withering, then he will not be easily startled by anything that may happen, if a person can view fame and wealth as ever-changing as the clouds, he will be able to remain calm and unperturbed’.]

Yun Duan was startled by Qing Shui’s words but she recovered very quickly and smiled back. “Hello, Qing Shui.”

Long Lingyun seemed to have thought of something after seeing both of them together. She retreated quietly with a smile.

“Are you still well?” Qing Shui didn’t really know what to say and only felt that his question was a little inappropriate after he

had asked.

“Yes, I am. What about you? It’s been so many years. Are you still at the Heavenly Palace?” A look of desolation flashed across Yun Duan’s face but she still replied with a smile.

Qing Shui caught a glimpse of it. Naturally, he didn’t have to see personally to know that she hadn’t been well. After all, he knew everything about the Cloud Adventurer Guild, at least for the most part. The person who could suppress the situations in the Cloud Adventurer Guild was no longer here. She had to unite with the Mighty Tiger Adventurer Guild by marriage but even doing so didn’t seem to be able to turn the situation around.

When he met her for the first time back then, he was only a disciple from the Heavenly Palace’s Starmoon Hall with a little reputation. She left the Heavenly Palace, so naturally she wouldn’t know the current situation there.

“Yes, I’m still at the Heavenly Palace and have been fine. I really didn’t expect you to be from the Central Continent.” Qing Shui brushed it off with a smile.

“I went out that time to gather experience and came to the Greencloud Continent. But then I got into danger and was rescued by someone. I wanted to leave but I didn’t want to owe anyone favors. I left after that and came back. What about you? What are you here at the Central Continent for? Can I help you with anything?” Yun Duan looked at Qing Shui earnestly.

He had thought that they'd be strangers and never see each other again. But meeting again after all these years, they could still act like very good friends to each other. On top of that, Qing Shui felt her sincerity.

That sword pierce from back then was still vivid in his mind. Although the wound was not deep at that time, his heart ached very much. Qing Shui's heart was hard but he wasn't ruthless enough. He couldn't be indifferent. He had a one night stand with Yun Duan back then. Even if they had become strangers after that, his heart still ached after being pierced by her sword.

This was also why he couldn't ever 'fool around with the beautiful ladies'. He simply couldn't bring himself to be a heartless person.

"I'm here to find a type of medicinal herb while taking the opportunity to relax. They are from the Mighty Tiger Adventurer Guild. Are you in some kind of troubles?" Qing Shui pointed at the spot that had been cleanly taken care of.

"I'm fine. The day after tomorrow will be my wedding with the chief of the Mighty Tiger Adventurer Guild. Come have a cup of wine if you are free." Yun Duan shook her head and chuckled.

He knew that she was only inclined towards doing that because of the Cloud Adventurer Guild. He didn't know how to evaluate those who would sacrifice themselves for their clan because he felt that he was the same type of person.

And because he was also the same type of person, he thought that this kind of people was very foolish. He couldn't help but to think that people like this didn't know how to chase after their own happiness because they were being chained down too much and unable to break free.

But everyone was after different things. People like this took their family matters very seriously. They were willing to sacrifice themselves rather than to let their loved ones and family be harmed.

“You're not happy.” Qing Shui stated dully.

Both of them knew it clearly in their hearts, the incident that had happened before was just a mistake. But it had already happened and they were also the same kind of people. If the two of them didn't miraculously meet here, they'd probably never look for each other in their entire lives.

This meeting seemed to make both of them understood something but some words were still difficult to say.

People like them had extremely high self-respect. But Qing Shui knew that Yun Duan was prideful while he was humble.

“No, I am very happy.” Yun Duan insisted stubbornly. But there was a layer of mist in her beautiful eyes.

No one knew the pain in her heart. For the sake of her father and

her clan, she had no other choice but to do this. She had to do this for hope. She didn't even have anyone to pour her heart out to. Many of her relatives didn't understand either and even congratulated her.

She didn't know why she felt such grievance in her heart when she saw him today. She didn't know why he had to rip the mask she had tried so hard to create and didn't allow her to even keep her last bit of persistence.

“Everyone have it tough. You aren't in the toughest spot because you can actually choose another path to walk on.” Qing Shui said with a smile. He had been watching this stubborn yet beautiful woman.

He wasn't saying that she had done the correct or wrong thing. On the contrary, Qing Shui felt that she did a great thing. People should do what was appropriate and discard what was inappropriate. His heart ached a little at her persistence and effort to endure, but he thought she was a little adorable at the same time.

“That's enough. I am already out of options. Let me have a last bit of hope.” Two drops of tears slid down her face but she immediately wiped it as she forced herself to smile and chuckle.

It would have been fine if she was marrying someone else normally. Although she had been intimate with two people before, that was not love. Besides, it was normal for her to marry someone.

But now that he knew that she was being forced into marriage, he should help her even if it was for only the fate of a single night back then because he now had the ability to do so.

“Regardless of everything, we’re acquaintances. It’s been so long since we saw each other, let’s consider it as my gift for you. Why don’t you let me help you in this? You don’t have to marry him.” Qing Shui offered with a smile.

“Thank you, Qing Shui. But stop joking.” Yun Duan shook her head and laughed.

Qing Shui knew that she wouldn’t believe him. She wasn’t going to joke about the lives of her clan and the Cloud Adventurer Guild.

“Do you think that the Mighty Tiger Adventurer Guild will not know about what happened today? Are they going to just let this slide? You should know how the Mighty Tiger Adventurer Guild takes care of things right?” Qing Shui didn’t say much. He already had a well thought plan for this.

Yun Duan understood Qing Shui’s words very well, but she still hold onto her hope. Now that Qing Shui had said it out loud, she felt that her hope was really dim right at this moment.

“Sigh, I can only wait and see.” The raspy yet attractive voice had a deep helplessness in it.

By now, everything had already been cleaned up. Seeing that Qing Shui and Yun Duan were talking, no one came over. After Yun Duan saw it, he smiled at Qing Shui. “Let’s return. I’m treating you to some wine.”

“Sure.” Qing Shui smiled.

.....

The few flying beasts flew towards the Heavenly Beast City.

“Uncle, how did you know Sister Yun Duan?” Long Lingyun stood beside Qing Shui and asked with a smile.

On their return journey, Qing Shui rode on Long Lingyun’s mount. Qian Mo was as silent as usual.

To be called ‘uncle’ by a lady with such personality made him felt a little awkward. But this was nothing when he remembered being called as ‘the Patriarch’ at the Heavenly Palace.

“I don’t really remember.” Qing Shui laughed.

“Hmph, my Sister Yun Duan is so beautiful. How can you not remember? Then tell me, what’s your relationship with my Sister Yun Duan? She has never been this close with a man before.” Long Lingyun continued to ask.

Qing Shui thought that this woman really couldn't be underestimated. Judging from her appearance, this lady definitely didn't seem like someone who like to interrogate. But obviously, he was mistaken.

AST 833 – Aggravation Of A Situation, Helpless Yun Duan

“We are friends.” Qing Shui replied with a smile.

“Hmph. That isn’t a good answer. Uncle, do you like Sister Yun Duan?” Long Lingyun’s beautiful eyes lit up brightly as she looked at Qing Shui.

“Children shouldn’t keep on asking these kind of adult questions.” Qing Shui sat down on the Silver-horned Eagle.

Ling Longyun went quiet.

This was his second time coming to the Cloud Adventurer Guild. He had come here as an adventurer on his first visit but as a guest on the second visit.

The Adventurer Guild never closed. The group entered the Adventurer Guild through another big entrance. The moment he entered, he saw the familiar big courtyard, pavilions, fake mountains and pond.....

Yun Duan led the way without stopping. The two elderly men left as soon as they entered the Adventurer Guild. Qi Gang, Qian Mo and Long Lingyun left too.

Long Lingyun seemed to be very reluctant as she left.

“Uncle, don’t forget that we have to go on an adventure when you have time.” Long Lingyun didn’t forget to remind Qing Shui before she left.

Qing Shui waved his hand and promised her as she left. Qing Shui knew he wasn’t going to stay here too long. It was likely he couldn’t go on another adventure with her before he had to leave.

Qing Shui had come here alone to the Central Continent, but he didn’t expect to actually meet Yun Duan here. Right now, he was walking with her towards her house. He had only knew now that this woman was the leader of the Cloud Adventurer Guild.

All of the people who managed Adventurer Guilds were addressed as the Leader.

Qing Shui had initially wondered why this Cloud Adventurer Guild was named after [Yun Duan](#). But now it seemed like that they had intended for some time for her to become their leader.

[TL Note: The Cloud Adventurer Guild translates to Yun Duan Adventurer Guild in chinese.]

Yun Duan and Qing Shui walked towards the path at the northern courtyard, which was a little more than a hundred metres wide. The two of them walked side by side, with a speed that wasn’t really fast.

“You are the leader of the Cloud Adventurer Guild. If you go to

the Mighty Tiger Adventurer Guild, what happens here?” Qing Shui asked with a smile.

“My father will manage here.” Yun Duan replied softly.

“How long has this Adventurer Guild used your name?” Qing Shui was very curious about this. He wanted to know if this place had only changed its name after she had become the leader.

“Hehe. This is quite funny. Grandfather had said that I was destined to lead a good life as soon as I was born. He said that I would have glory, splendor, wealth and rank and would even make the Adventurer Guild shine. Therefore, he changed the name of the Adventurer Guild without any second thought on the very day I was born. On that day, I was also named [Yun Duan](#), with the intention of eventually reaching that height. He had just passed away not long ago and things turned out this way. Perhaps he didn’t expect that the person he had so much faith in would become like this.” Yun Duan’s words were very calm, but her grievance could still be seen. Although her tears didn’t fall, she had reached the pinnacle of the situation, a circumstance where there were no longer any tears to shed.

[TL Note: Yun Duan means high in the clouds.]

Qing Shui was startled after he heard what Yun Duan told him. It was unfortunate that the grandfather she was talking about had passed away. Otherwise, he would’ve wanted to meet this old man who had single-handedly supported the Cloud Adventurer Guild. He was also curious about how he could predict that his granddaughter would be destined to have wealth and prestige.

Qing Shui didn't believe in fortune telling back in his previous world, but now he could divine some things. He could tell the fortune of a person by reading his facial features and bones. If a person who had great bone structure also had good aptitude, it wouldn't be too difficult for him or her to become the strongest with just a little luck. Of course, for this to be true, he or she would need to have exceptional bone structure and aptitude.

Bones were bizarre things. Some people had not only good bone structures but also good brains. It was very easy for an extremely bright person to stand out among his peers. Of course, not everything was absolute. There were also many people with unrecognized talents. However, this world advocated martial arts, so the chance of that happening were pretty small.

Boys and girls with well proportioned skeleton frames and good constitutions would usually be handsome and beautiful when they grew up. These external conditions shouldn't be underestimated because they would sometimes play an important role, especially with women.

The appearance of a woman could cause the downfall of kingdoms and cities, of causing a calamity to its people. A heaven-defying beauty could even topple a large clan or sect. It was evident that the effects of cultivating beauty and temperament to its maximum for women would definitely be comparable to that of a weapon.

So, it was slightly easier to tell the fortune of a woman by reading her facial features. Qing Shui knew how to do it too. Unfortunately, he hadn't really believe in it, but now, he knew

that Yun Duan's grandfather was accurate in his readings.

He had decided to give Yun Duan everything he could, or at least a peaceful environment. Glory, splendor, wealth and rank weren't too difficult to attain. As long as her Cloud Adventurer Guild became powerful, she'd have everything.

It wasn't like the Cloud Adventurer Guild didn't have any powerful cultivators. Qing Shui knew this as soon as he had entered the Cloud Adventurer Guild. He already knew some of the reasons behind this with just his intuition and the information he heard.

The Mighty Tiger Adventurer Guild was the most powerful guild. They used threats and bribes to break up the powerful cultivators of the Cloud Adventurer Guild and force them into a corner. This was why the Cloud Adventurer Guild had been forced into a position where they didn't even have any strength to retaliate.

"Is the disparity in strength between the Cloud Adventurer Guild and the Mighty Adventurer Guild really that great?" Qing Shui asked as they walked.

"I'm lacking in strength and I'm a woman on top of that. Even so, grandfather still insisted that I take over the Cloud Adventurer Guild so this resulted in some complaints among the people. Grandfather is no longer here and the Mighty Tiger Adventurer Guild had been undermining us while we tried to maintain peace. To them now, the Cloud Adventurer Guild probably looks like it will collapse at a single blow." Yun Duan laughed as if she was mocking herself.

Passing through a corridor, they arrived at a manor. There were many women and children as well as some old men. Some were playing chess, while others were slowly practising sword and fist techniques

It was very peaceful here and there were rows of manors. The people who lived here were all the family of the Cloud Adventurer Guild's core members. Two rows of weeping willows lined both sides of the path.

He could see that the place was very clean with just a single glance. The air here was also very fresh. Many children were running around and playing and they would all greet Yun Duan when they passed her.

“Hello, Big Sister!”

“Hello, Auntie!”

“Is he your boyfriend?”

.....

The questions that the children asked were also quite complicated. Qing Shui looked at them in amusement but didn't say anything. Yun Duan greeted them with a smile and occasionally reached out to pat their heads.

Qing Shui was sure that the Mighty Tiger Adventurer Guild would definitely use these people and her clan to force her to give in. A woman was indeed helpless when she was in this kind of situation.

This must be why many beautiful ladies have suffered an unlucky life since ancient times!

After not too long, they went into a courtyard on the left. Across the entrance of the courtyard was a small fake mountain that stood in front of a small pond. There was an arched bridge above the pond, whose flowing water was pleasant and melodious. Just listening could easily calm one down. There was a purple colored pavilion stood beside the tranquil pond.

On the other side was a small bamboo forest and there was a two-story small building not far from the forest. A winding corridor led to another building.

Just at this moment, a few people came out from that building. There was a handsome middle-aged man who appeared to have been through the vicissitudes of life, a beautiful madam that was aging gracefully and a few handsome young men who were about the age of 40. He could feel a wave of oppression surrounding all of them at a single glance.

“Father, Mother, Big Brother, Third Brother, Little Brother, you’re all here.” Yun Duan greeted them with a smile.

“Little Sister, you are supposed to marry Hu Yunlong, the leader

of the Mighty Tiger Adventurer Guild the day after tomorrow! Why are you with another man?" The man who looked slightly older compared to the other young men reprimanded.

"Big Brother, this is my friend." A look of pain flashed across Yun Duan's eyes.

"Yun Yao, how could you speak like that to your sister?" The scholarly middle aged man immediately shouted.

"Duan'er, come introduce him to your mother. It is very rare for you to bring friends over." The woman held Yun Duan's hand and smiled benevolently. There was a pained look in her eyes. Yun Duan was her only daughter and she loved her dearly, much more so than her other few sons. But now, she had to suffer. As a mother, this feeling was intensely agonizing.

"Mother, this is Qing Shui. A very good friend of mine." Yun Duan introduced him with a smile.

"How do you do?" Qing Shui smiled and greeted them. When he heard how Yun Duan introduced him as a very good friend just now, he wasn't certain on what to feel.

"This fellow is not bad. Come, let's go in. Mealtime is ready. It's just a normal one so I hope you won't mind." The scholarly and handsome man invited Qing Shui warmly.

"Why would I mind? I shall intrude upon you all then." Qing

Shui modestly followed the people of the Yun Clan into a big lounge.

“Lass, I’ve thought about this. You mustn’t marry over there. Not when I am still alive.” The man suddenly said when they were eating their meal.

If Qing Shui didn’t previously know the situation, he definitely wouldn’t understand what was going on.

“Father, if Little Sister doesn’t marry Hu Yunlong, the Mighty Tiger Adventurer Guild will kill us all.” Yun Yao said agitatedly.

“Bastard, are you saying that your Little Sister should marry that old geezer who is even older than me by 200 years old for the sake of staying alive?” The man slammed the chopsticks in his hands against the table.

Yun Yao didn’t dare utter another single word.

“Yun Peng, calm down. Duan’er isn’t marrying anyone. We can’t let our daughter suffer even if it costs our lives.” The beautiful madam hurriedly said.

“Father, Mother, your daughter is willing to do this. Don’t be sad. Ensuring that our Adventurer Guild can survive and be passed down to the next generations are the most important things.” Yun Duan assured with a smile.

“Little Sister, Third Brother has the same opinion as Father. This Adventurer Guild means nothing if you have to suffer like this.” Yun Yang, who had been silent all this time, finally spoke up.

Qing Shui had already identified these few people from the introduction earlier. The scholarly handsome man was Yun Peng. The eldest son was Yun Yao. The third son who had just spoken was Yun Yang, the fourth son was Yun Chi, followed by Yun Duan’s youngest brother, Yun Tong.

“That’s right. Big Sister, I am against the idea of having you marry into there as well. We will really never be able to live in dignity for the rest of our life.” Yun Tong bit down on his lip.

Just then, someone came in from outside. It was an elderly man. He looked around and hesitated for a moment before saying “The people from the Mighty Tiger Adventurer Guild are here.”

The middle-aged man frowned. “What are they here for?”

“They said they are bringing Miss back.” The elderly man also frowned as he responded.

“Bringing back?”

“Yes and they are very aggressive. It’s Hu Wenlong and his company.”

“Hu Wenlong?” Yun Yao exclaimed in surprise.

Yun Duan's body quivered too after hearing it was Hu Wenlong. For them to suddenly come to bring her back, they probably knew that she had killed Hu Yuanqing.

Right now, she felt as if all her hopes had turned to dust. They already knew about it. Was this going to be the end for her, her clan and the Cloud Adventurer Guild?

She missed the time when her grandfather was still around. She missed her grandfather. When he was around, the Mighty Tiger Adventurer Guild didn't dare to take such actions against them.

Now that her grandfather wasn't around, the Cloud Adventurer Guild was as powerless as a newborn infant.

"Uncle Qiong, tell them that I'll be over right away." Yun Duan told the elderly man with a smile.

After the old man left, the room grew silent.

Hu Wenlong was Hu Yunlong's elder brother. He was the elder brother of the Mighty Tiger Adventurer Guild's leader and a Grand Elder. The position of Grand Elder could only be held by someone powerful. Without power, even an immediate clan member wasn't allowed to hold the position. It was evident that this person was very important.

AST 834 – Yun Duan’s Heart, Hu Wei Adventurer Guild

Yun Duan was stunned for a moment, “I will go check.”

She spoke in a mild manner. She knew how powerful Hu Wenlong was since he was one of the top-rankers in Hu Wei Adventurer Guild. Even the head, Hu Yunlong could not defeat him. He could have easily gotten the position as the head but he was too obsessed about martial arts. He loved cultivating and was engrossed in it, so the position fell to Hu Yunlong.

Even though he disliked troublesome matters, he enjoyed fighting and was very protective of his own people. Everyone in Heavenly Beast City knew about Hu Wenlong’s character and how he dealt with his affairs. There was an occasion when a talented member from the Zhou Clan in Heavenly Beast City maimed the son of the fifth brother, Hu Yanglong, of the Hu Clan. After that, Hu Wenlong directly eliminated the entire Zhou Clan.

The incident caused a ruckus in Heavenly Beast City but Hu Wei Adventurer Guild was extremely powerful so nobody dared to criticize them. Besides, the entire Zhou Clan had disappeared so no one wanted to stir up trouble for themselves.

After this incident, no one dared to offend the people from Hu Wei Adventurer Guild. The disciples of the core members became more and more arrogant and unreasonable because most people could only hold their grudges silently and not retaliate. As a result, the members from Hu Wei Adventurer Guild habitually oppressed others.

Many people wished to join Hu Wei Adventurer Guild as it was the ticket to staying alive since the Guild had great influence in Heavenly Beast City and even the nearby surrounding cities.

“Father will go with you, even though I do not have the ability to protect you,” a handsome scholarly man sighed helplessly.

“Father, don’t say that about yourself. I am happy that I have a father like you. I feel blessed,” Yun Duan said happily.

Yun Duan knew that her father would definitely follow her so she did not attempt to dissuade him. She looked at Qing Shui, “Don’t involve yourself in this mess. Tong’er, please show Qing Shui the way out.”

“Elder sis, I want to accompany you.” Yun Tong held out his fists as he knew that this matter was not as simple as it seemed.

“Let me bring her away with me.” Yun Yao stood up and said. He knew that the situation facing them was tricky. His plan was to escape with her and either return after things died down or never return if something went wrong.

The scholarly man sighed and so did the others. Even his beautiful wife’s eyes glistened with grief. Yun Duan hesitated for a moment and said, “Qing Shui, I kept thinking of you since the last time we parted. Even though I stabbed you, my heart hurt. Over these few years, I will think about you every now and then. I don’t really understand what we have between us but I just want you to

be well. We will always be friends.”

Perhaps, only during the most fragile period of her life did she realized that she had so many regrets. Luckily for her, she could see Qing Shui during the final juncture of her life.

She knew that she would definitely die this time so she discard her reservations and told him her honest feelings.

She had kept her virginity until her encounter with Qing Shui and had never had any intimate contact with other men after that. Such a woman would not forget the man she had her first sexual experience with but she never said that aloud.

She knew that if she didn't confess today, she might never have the chance to do so. At least he would know her feelings and see that she was not a wanton woman.

Qing Shui was stunned when he heard what she said. He could never have imagined that such an obstinate woman would actually show her vulnerability now.

“Qing Shui, you should leave with my brother. Don't even come back to Heavenly Beast City,” Yun Duan said gently as she faced Qing Shui. She looked as if she was about to reach out to him but did not do so in the end.

“I already told you that I will settle matters with Hu Wei Adventurer Guild. Don't you remember that your grandfather said

that you will have a fortunate life? Don't you know that Hu Wei Adventurer Guild will become stronger because of you? I am the man of your destiny so let me step in." Qing Shui smiled slightly.

"Qing Shui, I know that you want to help. Even though you are very powerful now, you can't defeat Hu Wei Adventurer Guild. So please listen to me and leave with my brother. Before it is too late." Yun Duan was a little emotional and spoke very quickly.

Qing Shui felt a warmth in his heart hearing her words. So, she was actually so gentle. Qing Shui liked her tender voice and it was even more heartfelt since it came from such a prideful woman. He was very happy and wanted to give her a stable life despite not being able to give her much affection.

Perhaps because she was too involved in the issue, Yun Duan did not believe for a moment that Qing Shui had the ability to go against Hu Wei Adventurer Guild. On the other hand, even though it was unbelievable to the others, they still saw it as a hope.

"Qing Shui, quick! Let me send you out. If we delay, it may be too late. Don't upset my younger sister." Yun Yao urged anxiously.

"You are unworthy of being her elder brother. I can make my own decision and you can leave. If you want to run away, you can go ahead, no one will stop you," Qing Shui said calmly.

"Who do you think you are? How dare you criticize me?" Yun Yao yelled at Qing Shui, angered by embarrassment after Qing Shui exposed him.

“If you weren’t Yun Duan’s elder brother, I wouldn’t even waste my saliva on you. How can a man use his own sister as a bargaining chip. You are just a spineless coward so don’t get angry. You don’t deserve to be angry because you are not even an ant in my eyes.” Qing Shui suddenly released his spiritual energy creating an oppressive aura.

Yun Yao fell to the ground due to the oppressive aura and his sweat poured from his entire body, he was rendered speechless.

Suddenly, sounds of explosion came from outside. They also heard screams and cries. Yun Duan ran outside, not knowing what had happened. Qing Shui looked at the members of the Yun Clan before running out after her.

The commotion came from the main hall of the Cloud Adventurer Guild. Apparently, the main hall had been destroyed. Hu Wei Adventurer Guild had really been offended. Qing Shui smiled at Yun Duan and the other members of the Yun family also followed them outside.

“Hu Wenlong, you are really too much,” Before they reached the main hall, a loud old-sounding voice rang out.

“You old men, how foolish! Cloud Adventurer Guild will be destroyed because of this silly little girl. I’m giving you the easy way out. Get out of my way. If you stop me, I will annihilate your entire clan.” a similarly old but much more overbearing voice replied.

“We are grateful to the old sir of this place. Even if I die here, I will not let you bring away our young mistress,” Some old voices rang out.

“Stupid fools! If you join our Hu Wei Adventurer Guild, you will enjoy a life of riches and your future generations will have easier lives. Look there are intelligent people from the Yun Clan too. Why don’t you ask them if they suffered after they joined my Hu Wei Adventurer Guild?” The oppressive old voice retorted.

“Third Brother, there are many opportunities in Hu Wei Adventurer Guild. Come on, we should...”

“Shut up! When you left Cloud Adventurer Guild, we disowned you. A person without any moral boundaries does not deserve to be called a human.”

“People always seek to climb up higher and water will always flow downwards. I don’t think I made the wrong decision. We all have our own pursuits. Why do you have to be so stubborn?”

“ Sixth, if you left us in the past, I would not criticize you. But the Grand Ancestor is not around and Hu Wei Adventurer Guild is breathing down our backs, yet you choose to leave us without a hint of guilt at this critical point and even join our rivals, Hu Wei Adventurer Guild! Is this what a decent person does? If Hu Wei Adventurer Guild ends up like our Cloud Adventurer Guild, will you also switch sides and go against Hu Wei Adventurer Guild?” The man who spoke previously replied. A soft approach was

always more effective than a aggressive reply.

Hu Wenlong frowned, “San Cai, you can stop creating disaccord. Since you don’t accept our offer, don’t blame us for being unpleasant. It’s your own choice to seek death!”

“Bring it on. Even if we die, we won’t make this easy for you!”

At that moment, Qing Shui was already nearby. He could see that the main hall was destroyed and there was rubble everywhere. At the same time, there were people lying on the ground; some of them were already dead. There were many people surrounding the site, other than the adventurers there were also people who just wanted to watch the commotion.

The most eye-catching person among them was an exceptionally tall and muscular elderly man. He was at least 8 chi and was distinctly taller than the rest of the people. He wore a purple battle armor and had a headful of white hair and chiselled features. Even though he was old, he looked more energetic and powerful than any other younger man.

There were about 20 people behind that old man, they were either middle-aged or as old as him. The aura of the man standing at the forefront made Qing Shui conclude that he was Hu Wenlong.

Their opponents were also a bunch of middle-aged and elderly men. There were more than 20 of them but none of them could match Hu Wenlong, so they were still at a disadvantage.

“Stop!” Yun Duan shouted to stop the old men from attacking.

“Third Grandfather, Fifth Grandfather...” Yun Duan shouted out. Her heart ached knowing the perseverance of these men, she was touched.

“Hai, what a pitiful child,” the old men sighed.

“I am here. Why do you want to kill them?” Yun Duan yelled at Hu Wenlong, she was extremely furious.

“Why do I want to kill? Don’t you know? I want to kill them and show them how they die!” the sturdy old man glared at Yun Duan and sent a powerful aura towards her.

Yun Duan was only a low grade Martial Saint so there was no way she could withstand it. Her body felt weak and her face turned pale but she forced herself to stand. But the aura that weighed like a mountain was like an ocean that could swallow up her tiny boat anytime.

Just then, Qing Shui stood in front of Yun Duan. It was as if her tiny boat had found a refuge and the waves around her became calm again. The figure in front of her wasn’t huge but it was so sturdy that her heart calmed down.

Qing Shui stood smiling at Hu Wenlong, “Hu Wei Adventurer Guild is so arrogant! Aren’t you afraid that someone will pull over

your tiger tooth?”

“Who are you? How dare you speak to me in this manner? You’ve got some nerve!” the old man boomed loudly. His voice continued ringing in the ears of the surrounding people as the man increased the pressure on Qing Shui.

He wanted to embarrass Qing Shui. How dare that young chap challenge him?

However, he realized that his pressure was like a sinking rock in an ocean. The young man did not show any reaction. It was as if the young man felt nothing. Just when the old man was bewildered, Qing Shui’s aura rushed towards him like a thunderstorm.

Like a ferocious tiger out of the mountains, the force was overwhelming!

AST 835 – Killing Hu Wenlong In An Instant, Pounding Heart

It was like a tiger's descent from a mountain, no one could withstand the pressure!

Caught unaware, Hu Wenlong was forced to take a step back after facing Qing Shui's pressure. This made him extremely astonished and he felt that he had lost his reputation.

The young man opposite him was only a Xiantian...

"That's not right!" Hu Wenlong squinted his eyes. It was because up to now, he still could only sense that this young man was at a Xiantian level. However, he was able to push Hu Wenlong back one step. Even if Hu Wenlong had let his guard down earlier, he was still not one whom a Xiantian cultivator would be able to push back just with aura alone.

"Moreover, if he's a Xiantian cultivator, I'd be able to crush him just by pressure alone. However, it seems like he's able to ignore my pressure?" Hu Wenlong was still extremely astonished.

He felt that Qing Shui was not such an expert, not at his young age. Then it must be because the young man could ignore other people's pressure or had even cultivated some special mental martial technique.

There was a kind of powerful person in the world of the nine

continents. This kind of person had a powerful spirit energy and cultivated Five Element Art or some technique which increased one's attacks via spirit energy.

Five Element Art was a type of technique where one cultivated the five elements, just like Qing Shui's primordial flames. Such techniques was related to one's powerful spirit energy and usually, most of these people would become alchemists, forgers and beast tamers.

Another job one could take was to be a "Spiritualist". This job had a higher requirement for one's spirit energy as compared to the cultivation of Five Element Art or other jobs such as alchemists, Forgers and beast tamers. They do not perform alchemy, do not forge weapons, nor do they tame beasts. They only kill.

"Spiritualist" kill without showing a drop of blood nor do they use blades. They rely on their powerful spirit energy, through cultivating unique spirit energy attacking techniques, directly attacking one's brain and soul, unbeknownst to anyone.

These people were very terrifying but they had very weak physiques. They would have no other way out if they came across people with powerful spirit energy. Usually, they would have people to guard them. Although they were extremely good at killing people, they were also easily killed.

It was tens of times more difficult to become a powerful "Spiritualist" than to become a powerful cultivator. It was because the talent required of the Spiritualist was much harsher and even

the cultivation techniques they used were extremely unique and rare. There were many people who had powerful spirit energy but did not have the techniques to attack with their spirit energy and thus missed out on the chance to become a “Spiritualist”.

Martial arts cultivators trained their “body” and “Qi”. Although their spirit energy would increase as their bodies become more powerful, such increases were slow and gradual. Martial arts cultivators of the same level would usually not have a big difference in terms of their spirit energy.

They were unlike Qing Shui who had the Yin-Yang Image and Nature Energy!

Nature Energy could power up the user’s spirit energy cultivation but was not able to allow one to better unleash one’s spirit energy to perform attacks.

It was like the Ancient Strengthening Technique which increased Qing Shui’s cultivation level. However, it required various battle techniques such as the Sword of the Sixth Wave, Basic Sword Techniques, Combination Sword Technique and the hidden weapons to bring about stronger destructive forces.

The same went for attacks with spirit energy. Qing Shui’s Nature Energy and Yin-Yang Image were comparable to his Ancient Strengthening Technique but Qing Shui’s primordial flames could only be considered a type of the Five Element Art and was not a technique which allowed him to attack with his spirit energy.

The old man was worried that Qing Shui was the type of person who cultivated techniques to attack others with their spirit energy. After all, while those people appeared to be very weak, they could easily kill their targets and could even kill people who appeared to be much stronger than themselves.

“Young lad, come to our Hu Wei Adventurer Guild. I’ll give you the position of an Elder,” Hu Wenlong looked at Qing Shui and said seriously.

Qing Shui had thought that the other party could not wait to kill him but to think that he was trying to pull him to his side. Moreover, it seemed that the offer was not small.

It was a pity that even if he were to give the entire Hu Wei Adventurer Guild to him, he would not be interested. Moreover, it was hard to tell if this was a trick.

Qing Shui’s expression did not change, as if he was thinking.

“I’ll not just give you the position of an Elder, I’ll also give you a manor, twenty beautiful maids, two thousand gold and jewellery...”

Seeing that Qing Shui was deep in thought, Hu Wenlong continued.

Qing Shui had not expected that Hu Wenlong was one who would actively bribe people. It might be because of Hu Wenlong’s status.

This position of Elder was still very significant. Twenty beautiful maids would also be a great temptation for lecherous people. And the two thousand gold and jewellery... Status, money and beauties... all of them had been taken into consideration.

“If I want the entire Hu Wei Adventurer Guild, would you give it to me?” Qing Shui lifted his head and asked Hu Wenlong calmly. He wanted to make a fool out of Hu Wenlong, wanted to make him angry.

“How dare you! To think that you don’t appreciate the goodwill of somebody else. You don’t know any better!” Hu Wenlong bellowed furiously.

“How dare I?”

“Haha, wait till I flatten the entire Hu Wei Adventurer Guild, you’ll know if I dare to do so or not.” Qing Shui continued to look at Hu Wenlong calmly. Qing Shui had not given a hoot for the Hu Wei Adventurer Guild but he was still very careful when dealing with them.

“Grand Elder, I’ll go kill him.” A middle-aged man behind Hu Wenlong said in a soft voice.

Hu Wenlong nodded. It was only his suspicions that Qing Shui was a Spiritualist. After all, Spiritualist were too rare and thus he wanted to take this opportunity to test it out.

The middle-aged man drew out his longsword and pounced toward Qing Shui without a second word.

His leap was very unique, appearing to be slow but was in fact very fast. The longsword in his hand brought about a pitch black after image as it swept out toward Qing Shui, immediately making the air in the area cooler by a few degrees.

Qing Shui shook his head, not retreating but instead, advancing forward. He launched out his right hand at great speed, hitting against the man's throat.

Pfft!

The sound of his throat being torn apart rang out and the man eyes popped out in disbelief right in front of Qing Shui.

This time around, Hu Wenlong was truly astonished. He felt that this young man's abilities were no weaker than his own.

Qing Shui turned to look at Yun Duan who was in a slight daze. "Trust me, while I might not be able to bring you great wealth, I can give you the life that you want."

Yun Duan looked at Qing Shui in a daze. At this moment, it was as if something warm was flowing in her heart, giving new life to her entire body.

Qing Shui looked at Yun Duan and smiled before he turned back

to look at Hu Wenlong. He then charged out like an agile leopard.

His aura and martial techniques were all circulated to the peak and the Big Dipper Sword and Thunder God appeared quickly in his hands. He wanted to give this Hu Wei Adventurer Guild a strong last blow.

Qing Shui sensed that Hu Wenlong's abilities were about four and a half stars. In Heavenly Beast City, this was already considered relatively powerful. What Qing Shui wanted to do when he dashed over, was to deal the fatal blow.

Sword of Sixth Wave!

Qing Shui did not weaken the opponent since there was no need to. When their abilities were about the same, the Sword of Sixth Wave could kill his opponent instantly. Moreover, this old man's abilities were not as strong as when he was in his peak.

Ding ding ding...

Sharp sounds of metal collisions rang out. A faint smile appeared on Qing Shui's face while the look on Hu Wenlong's was one of disbelief and desperation. He had not expected himself to be killed even in his dreams. Moreover, it was at the hands of such a young man.

The short moment was like a hundred years and he was devoured by darkness.

It was absolutely quiet in the surroundings, without a hint of sound. They could even hear the sound of breathing. Everyone forgot what they were supposed to do.

Dead! instantly killed!

“My eyes haven’t played any tricks on me, right? Hu Wenlong was instantly killed by a young man?” Someone rubbed their eyes so hard that they had turned red as he spoke in disbelief.

“Who is this young man? He seems to have a very good relationship with Miss Yun Duan.”

“That’s right. Could he be Miss Yun Duan’s lover?”

“It’s hard to say. Hu Yunlong was dreaming of getting his hands on Miss Yun Duan despite his old age. This is great. Hu Wei Adventurer Guild is probably goners now.”

.....

The commotion in the surroundings grew increasingly louder. There were people who were happy, there were people who were aggrieved. However, most of the people were wearing a gloating expression. Right now, the people who were the happiest were the people from Cloud Adventurer Guild.

Yun Duan stood there and watched in a daze. She could not believe that everything she saw was true. Yun Peng smiled with her face flushed red. The beautiful married lady stood there, tears flowing out of her eyes. Those were tears of happiness. She knew that her daughter no longer had to go through a hard life anymore.

Yun Chi, Yun Yang, Yun Tong and the others were also extremely excited. Only Yun Xiao was gloomy. He had broken out in cold sweat. If it was not for Yun Duan, eldest brother would probably have been killed by that guy...

“Hahaha, heaven has eyes!” The man who was called 3rd brother earlier broke out into laughter. The old men next to him were also overjoyed.

The elderly men who were opposite them, having ran away from Cloud Adventurer Guild to join Hu Wei Adventurer Guild, now had pale faces. In the blink of an eye, not only were their reputations ruined but everything they owned, including their lives, were going to be lost soon.

“Heavens, you’ve finally done something right for once. Old Master’s decision back then was right. Miss was one was born for great things. The Cloud Adventurer Guild will definitely grow,” the old man said, with tears of happiness flowing.

His words also sent out a message toward the people around them. Yun Duan was their hope. Yun Duan had the help of a great person and Cloud Adventurer Guild would become stronger. No one would be able to come offend them easily.

Just as Qing Shui was about to kill the rest of the people, Yun Duan immediately spoke out, “Qing Shui, let them go.”

Qing Shui stopped and without saying a word, broke into a faint smile.

“They belonged to our Cloud Adventurer Guild in the past and have done great work for us. They also have big families to care for.”

“We’ll do as you say,” Qing Shui smiled and said. Seeing that a hint of her hair was brushing against his face from the wind, giving him a tingling feeling, he naturally helped her put her hair in place.

Yun Duan could not help but take one step back, a faint red blush appeared on her face. “Thank you!”

At this moment, the other old men from earlier walked over and bowed to Qing Shui. However, Qing Shui quickly helped them up. He could not stand to accept such a bow from them.

“Your martial techniques are very strong. Let us give you our thanks.”

“I’m very, very good friends with Miss Yun Duan. Her problems are mine. You guys don’t have to do this. I’m doing this willingly,” Qing Shui spoke out his heart felt thoughts.

When Yun Duan heard Qing Shui emphasizing that they were very, very good friends, she could not help but panic a little. She lifted her head to see Qing Shui smiling at her and quickly turned away. Her heart was pounding very quickly. Although they had had the closest skinship previously, it was an accident. It was only now that her heart was pounding very quickly...

AST 836 – Bringing The Fight To Their Doors, A Bunch Of Degenerates

Qing Shui looked at Yun Duan. He was aroused to see that sort of docile look on a matured and elegant woman like her.

She was the most beautiful woman in Heavenly Beast City, even Long Lingyun could not compare to her. Yet, Qing Shui was more amazed by the fate between the both of them. Without the events at Heavenly Palace, he wondered what would have happen today.

Fate is an amazing and mysterious thing. One cannot see or touch it. It only amazes a person at times, like in this moment.

Seeing the uncharacteristically bashful Yun Duan, Qing Shui averted his gaze. The others have already noticed their ambiguous relationship. They knew that it was the first time that the beautiful young lady of the Yun Clan actually showed such a docile expression to a man.

“Let’s not delay. Let’s go to Hu Wei Adventure Guild now!” Qing Shui said softly, looking at Yun Duan regaining her composure.

“Qing Shui, Hu Wei...”

“Trust me!” Qing Shui said gently. With a single gesture, his Fire Bird appeared in the sky. Many people were shocked by the ear-piercing call from the huge Fire Bird. The clear sound from the Fire Bird was much more awe-inspiring and regal than any other

average demonic beast.

“Uncle, Auntie, I will bring Yun Duan to Hu Wei Adventure Guild and put an end to things. You don’t have to worry. I won’t let anything happen to your daughter,” Qing Shui said to the scholarly-looking middle-aged man and his wife, smiling.

“Okay. Auntie won’t stop you and won’t try to dissuade you but please be careful.” There were tears of happiness on his beautiful wife’s face. She said this looking at Qing Shui joyfully.

After acknowledging the others with a nod, Qing Shui held Yun Duan’s snow-white wrist and leaped up into the sky, riding his Fire Bird. Yun Duan could not help trembling a little.

Qing Shui could not help feeling that women are a marvel. Even though they were not familiar with each other they have had sexual contact after all. Despite the years that have passed, he could stir her emotions just by holding her wrist.

He did not know whether he should be happy or crestfallen. Normally, in this situation, one would feel nervous and embarrassed, not knowing whether the other party would accept or reject them. But he felt anxious because he had such emotions when he thought about what she said previously.

It turned out that he also had feelings for her!

If he thought about it carefully, he did long for her woefully but

occasionally he would think of her and even have the impulse to look for her.

Yun Duan gave Qing Shui the directions and his Fire Bird stretched out its wings and disappeared from the sight of the crowd.

Qing Shui and Yun Duan stood side by side on his Fire Bird's back. A breeze blew as their sleeves fluttered behind them. Yun Duan's dress danced in the wind, making her elegant refined face even more poised and graceful.

"Thank you!" Yun Duan said to Qing Shui again.

Qing Shui turned to look at the woman standing close to him. In the past, they parted ways injuring each other. Yet, when they met again, they seemed to cherish the feelings between them.

"You said that many times. Just take it as if I owe you a favor. Actually, I think of you too. I don't know why but I always felt that I owed you something and I just want to see that you are living well." Qing Shui smiled as he looked to the distance.

Hearing Qing Shui's words, Yun Duan smiled, showing the gentle curve of her lips which was extremely alluring.

"You've matured!" Yun Duan said looking at Qing SHui.

Qing Shui was stunned for a moment before he smiled, "You've

also matured a lot from that time.”

“Am I old now?” Yun Duan asked softly, she sounded slightly anxious. She was indeed older than Qing Shui so she was a little worried about it. Even though she could still be considered young she could not help feeling a little awkward.

“No. How can the most beautiful woman in Heavenly Beast city get old? When everything is over, I’ll give you something, it will extend your youthful looks another 30 years.” Qing Shui laughed lightheartedly.

“Qing Shui, you are so powerful now. There is no one in Heavenly Palace stronger than you. Remembering the time when you were fighting with those rich brats seems so long ago.” Yun Duan had an indescribable feeling remember those past events.

“Qing Shui, it’s there.”

Just when Qing Shui was about to speak, Yun Duan pointed at the compound in a distance which looked similar to Cloud Adventurer Guild.

“Let’s get down here.”

Qing Shui did not stay on his Fire Bird but pulled Yun Duan with him as they jumped down towards Hu Wei Adventure Guild. He purposely held her jade-like hand tightly.

When they were in mid-air, Yun Duan looked at the unforgettable man by her side. She already trusted that he would bring her luck. She did not need fame and money but she did not know if he knew what she wanted.

His Fire Bird called out loudly, quickly alerting multiple members in Hu Wei Adventurer Guild. When Qing Shui landed in the inner courtyard, many people had appeared near them.

“Quick, inform the head, they are from Cloud Adventurer Guild. Just tell him that Yun Duan has arrived.”

“Why didn’t Great Elder return?”

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Qing Shui and Yun Duan stood in the middle of the courtyard looking at the people who surrounded them. When Qing Shui observed their strength, he knew that they were just a common mob, so he wanted to wait for the core members of Hu Wei Adventurer Guild.

“Lady Yun Duan, you can’t wait to get married so you came early to our Hu Wei Adventurer Guild, right?”

After a short time, over ten people approached them from a distance. They were all about the age of Hu Yuanqing. They were probably the grandchildren of the Hu Clan.

“Second brother, Grandfather is really too much. He is already so old and he has so many women. Now he won’t even give up on the most beautiful woman in Heavenly Beast City? I feel angry even as his grandson,” a sloppy looking man said.

“Seventh brother, Grandfather is only marrying this woman as a strategic measure. Besides, elder brother was killed by this woman. Do you think she will have a good life living here,” the Second Brother taunted as he looked at Yun Duan.

“So Second brother, you are saying that even if she is Grandfather’s wife in name, she is just a prisoner? Hehe...”the young man in red laughed.

“What should we do if that woman commits suicide here at Hu Wei Adventurer Guild?” the seventh brother said worriedly.

“Don’t worry. She won’t have a chance. She won’t die, since she had already agreed to join us, it means that she is afraid that we will deal with her family and the members of Cloud Adventurer Guild. We just need to use her family against her and she’ll do whatever we want,” the man said schemingly.

From their conversation, Qing Shui felt that the man who was called second brother was a core member. A cruel smile flashed across his face as Yun Duan fumed. It was spine chilling to think what would have happened without Qing Shui.

Qing Shui looked at the men in front of him. They looked refined but they were just beasts with human skins. With a flick of his

sleeve, he shot out a Coldsteel Needle. Even though it was a little far, that man could not dodge with the level of his current abilities.

The man did not even notice. He only felt a cold sensation on his forehead and immediately lost consciousness. The others only realized that something was wrong when the man fell to the ground.

“Second brother is dead!”

“They killed Second Brother!”

A stream of fresh blood poured from the middle of his forehead and just like that the man died.

.....

At this time, all the people suddenly felt chilled to the bone. They had not even noticed when the opponent attacked and their brother was killed. Furthermore, that man was the strongest among them. It was obvious that the young man in front of them was the culprit, since Yun Duan wouldn't dare to do that and she did not have the ability to do so.

Since he came here to kill, it was not necessary to spare the group of degenerates in front of him. Qing Shui lifted both arms and a sharp boom rang out in the air.

The youths of the Hu Clan immediately died, without even one

survivor.

At the same time, ten elders ran out. When they saw their dead younger family members sprawled out everywhere. They rushed at Qing Shui and Yun Duan furiously.

Qing Shui acted like nothing had happened. He looked at the old man who resembled Hu Wenlong. That man was also tall and muscular but he lacked the aggression that Hu Wenlong possessed and instead had a shrewdness. There were many others who also resembled Hu Wenlong.

“Qing Shui, the person leading them is the head of the Hu Wei Adventurer Guild, Hu Yunlong. Four of the others are his brothers. They are all the elders of Hu Wei Adventurer Guild. Usually they don’t involve themselves with the matters of the Guild,” Yun Duan informed Qing Shui.

Within a city like Heavenly Beast City, it was quite a feat that there were people with such capabilities. Since the place was quite remote and near Tiger Gorge mountain, there were pros and cons. It wasn’t a remarkable place so they don’t get attacked by other powerful enemies.

“You want to marry Yun Duan?” Qing SHui looked at Hu Yunlong and said calmly.

“Brat, don’t you know that this is Hu Wei Adventurer Guild?” Hu Yunlong glared at Qing Shui saying in a solemn voice. He was already very mad but he did not rush over to cut his opponent

down because he thought that it would be too easy on that young man.

“Of course! Not only do I know but I will crush this place. That useless Hu Wenlong has already been killed by me.” Qing Shui laughed, looking back at Hu Yunlong.

The members of the Hu Clan were dumbfounded when they heard what Qing Shui said. This was like a bolt from the blue. They didn't believe it at first but then they thought about the fact that Hu Wenlong had not returned. It could be that they had missed each other but if so why did these two people have the guts to be here?

Boom! Boom!

Qing Shui's Fire Bird shot out its Nether Fireball and started burning the buildings. The raging fire and the sound of crumbling buildings caused chaos. There were many people in Hu Wei Adventurer Guild, with the buildings falling apart, a crowd started to surround them yet no one dared to get close.

Just then, a middle-aged man ran anxiously in front of Hu Yunlong and whispered a few words. Hu Yunlong's face immediately turned as white as a sheet, he looked at Qing Shui as if he was seeing his nightmares come alive.

AST 837 – Like A Hot Knife Through Butter, Heart Toxin Talisman

Qing Shui heard their conversation clearly. The man verified the information that Hu Wenlong was dead. More importantly, Hu Wenlong was killed within seconds. If Qing Shui had the ability to kill Hu Wenlong in seconds, Hu Yunlong knew that Qing Shui could also easily kill him.

“Hey, look! Someone actually went to burn Hu Wei Adventurer Guild. They must be very powerful to do that!” Some people cheered happily when they noticed from a distance.

“Yes! I think Hu Wei Adventurer Guild is in deep trouble now! I can’t wait to see a good show!” Someone immediately replied.

“Hu Wei Adventurer Guild has committed so many atrocities over the years, this must be a retribution from heaven!”

“Hey, lower your voices. If Hu Wei Adventurer Guild wins this and finds out about this discussion, they won’t spare us,” a middle-aged man, who had been silent, quickly warned.

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“What vendetta do you have against Hu Wei Adventurer Guild?” Hu Yunlong looked at Qing Shui, he was still unable to accept that Qing Shui could actually kill Hu Wenlong.

“Because you dare to bully my woman. So should I annihilate all of you?” Qing Shui said calmly.

Hu Yunlong stared blankly at Yun Duan, who was slightly behind Qing Shui. He had never heard any news about the most beautiful woman in Heavenly Beast City having a romantic relationship. He never expected that she would entrust herself to such a powerful man and one so young.

It was no wonder why she didn't fancy any of the young talented men in Heavenly Beast City since those men weren't even worthy of carrying this young man's shoes. She probably saw those arrogant men as childish fools and he himself wasn't that powerful anyway.

Yun Duan trembled again when she heard what Qing Shui said. What did he mean by that? She was his woman?

His words were loud and clear so the many people around them all heard what he said.

What is he doing? Was he announcing his relationship with her? Yun Duan silently observed the man in front of her.

“Didn't I tell you? How can such a beautiful woman be unattached?” Someone explained hearing what Qing Shui had said.

“That's right. Only such an outstanding man is worthy to be with her. This time round Hu Wei Adventurer Guild has made the

wrong move in coercing Cloud Adventurer Guild. We can watch a good show now!” another person immediately said, rejoicing in Hu Wei Adventurer Guild’s impending doom.

“Yang Laosan, don’t speak so loudly. What if the members from Hu Wei Adventurer Guild seek revenge on you?” a middle-aged man advised the man who spoke.

“Hehe. Can’t you see that their buildings have been burnt down? Hu Wei Adventurer Guild will definitely be destroyed today! This man will never let those people escape!” Yang Laosan rebutted, smiling.

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“I will give you a chance to give it your best shot. Otherwise, you won’t even get to do anything,” Qing Shui said looking at Hu Yunlong. He was neither being careless nor righteous when he said this.

With a wave of his hand, he summoned his Diamond Gigantic Elephant. He wanted to make a lasting impression with all the strength he possessed. This was mainly so that no one would dare to target Cloud Adventurer Guild even after he left, since he had promised her that she would be safe. Besides that, Qing Shui also had other intentions.

Hu Yunlong took out his sword. It was a long sword which glowed with a moving green light. There was a sort of natural aura within it making it seem almost alive.

“Let’s attack him together, kill him!” Hu Yunlong suddenly yelled and rushed towards Qing Shui.

Even if one lost, they should keep their dignity and poise. The fact that they could not even do that made it clear that they had already lost.

Qing Shui responded calmly, drawing out his Big Dipper Sword. Since his opponents attacked first, he did not need to take anything else into consideration. He displayed his Combination Sword Technique and Cloudmist Steps together, in perfect unison.

Boom! Boom!

His Diamond Gigantic Elephant used its Mighty Elephant Stomp in the middle of the compound. The buildings around them fell rapidly. The impact was so forceful that it seemed like the entire ground would be destroyed. Even the people surrounding them were thrown a few hundred meters away!

Seven Star Armored Vest!

Without taking out his Thunder God, Qing Shui directly donned his Seven Star Armored Vest— he would have no problems as long as he didn’t receive damage to his vital points. His Four Moves Combination Sword Technique already gave a preview of his overwhelming strength.

Sixth Wave of the Sword!

Taking the opportunity, he immediately kill one of his opponents.

Cloudmist Steps gave him an almost demonic-like presence in such battles. With Qing Shui's speed, his opponents could only react passively— that meant that they could only stand there getting thrashed. Within a short time, half of his opponents were already defeated.

Critical Damage!

Without the added stats from his Thunder God, Qing Shui's ability was not much higher than those people. He might even be a little weaker than Hu Yunlong but he had many ways of getting rid of that man.

Qing Shui paused for a moment. Killing wasn't his final goal but only a means to an end. Yun Duan walked to his side and he turned and smiled at her. "Let's go back!"

Yun Duan smiled and nodded.

"Hahaha..."

Just then, a loud laughter rang out in the air. The resounding laughter was marred with resentment and recklessness.

Qing Shui shifted in front of Yun Duan quickly as he locked his eyes on a position in front of him.

An indistinct smile appeared on Yun Duan's face as she gazed at Qing Shui, who was shielding her. She had so many surprises today and she really wanted to hug him, that thought made her blush.

Many people were taken aback by the sudden laughter. Even a fool would know that the person who laughed was very powerful because even though the laughter was a few hundred meters away, it was ear-piercingly loud.

Qing Shui took out his Thunder God without panicking and continued looking in the direction the laughter came from.

A sturdy-looking old man walked towards them. His clothes were shabby and his hair was a mess. When Qing Shui saw the old man, he instantly understood the situation. That old man had been cultivating in seclusion.

The old man's face was full of sorrow when he saw the rubble around him. Then, it was replaced with rage. Finally, he gave Qing Shui a deadly stare, "Why did you do this?"

"Because they deserved to die! Who are you?" Qing Shui stared at the old man. That old man was much more powerful than Hu Wenlong so Qing Shui took out his Violet Gold Divine Shield.

“They deserved to die? Haha! Then, you too! I don’t know who I am but others call me Hu Langsha.” The old man’s eyes glowed with anger as he looked at Qing Shui.

“Huh, Hu Langsha. Didn’t he died twenty years ago?” Yun Duan blurted.

“You know him?” Qing Shui asked without turning his head.

“Twenty years ago, he was the most powerful person in Hu Wei Adventurer Guild. He is Hu Wenlong and Hu Yunlong’s father. After he came from Tiger Gorge Mountain with serious wounds, there were rumors that he died before he could recover. I didn’t think that he would be alive.” Yun Duan said worriedly.

“After I went into isolation for twenty years, I never expected that my territory would be totally razed to ground. Fine then! Let me see how good you are?” The old man pulled out a fully purple long sword after he finished his sentence and waved his hand.

Roar!

Suddenly, a huge demonic beast, entirely red, appeared above the old man’s head. Qing Shui was stunned for a moment when he realized that it was a Four-headed Red Jiao.

A Four-headed Red Jiao is a variety of Fantastic Beast. If it was another type of Four-headed Jiao, Qing Shui might have been a bit

apprehensive but a red variety of this did not threaten him, since a Red Jiao's speciality was fire.

Qing Shui's body had a very high resistance against fire because he possessed his primordial flames. Normal flames did little damage to him but that demonic beast still looked quite fearsome.

The Four-headed Red Jiao was about a hundred meters long. Its girth was about the size of three large water vats. A fiery aura enveloped its body while it moved and red hot steam poured from its four large sinister-looking horns. The air in the surrounding atmosphere became scorching hot, so much so that those who were weaker could not approach.

Qing Shui kept his Firebird. Carrying Yun Duan, he jumped up onto his Diamond Gigantic Elephant.

"Young fella, your elephant will be slaughtered in seconds by my Red Jiao," Hu Langsha said disdainfully.

I only need a split second to kill that giant worm of yours!" Qing Shui laughed, looking at the old man. He summoned his Ten Thousand Poisonous Violet Sable so that it could protect Yun Duan. Next, he summoned his Thunderous Beast.

As Qing Shui summoned his demonic beasts, Hu Langsha's eyes narrowed. He was very experienced and knowledgeable so he could recognize all the demonic beasts that Qing Shui had summoned. Then, he looked at the dead Hu Wei Adventurer Guild members. He had a feeling that this was not going to be as easy as he had

thought.

“Imbecile!”

“Come meet your death!” the old man brandished his purple sword and charged at Qing Shui.

“Remember, don’t get down!” Qing Shui turned to look at Yun Duan and then he retreated backwards quickly.

Descending Heavens Talisman!

At the same time, his Diamond Gigantic Elephant activated its Vajra Subdues Demons!

Fiery Golden Eyes!

Emperor’s Qi!

The effects immediately affected the old man.

The old man stopped suddenly. Qing Shui stood still as if he had anticipated that the old man would stop. He then looked at the old man who was now twenty meters away from him.

Hu Langsha’s body wobbled for a few moments, both his eyes locked onto Qing Shui, his hand on his purple sword trembled.

His strength had been shaved down from nine stars to not even six stars.

When a person's strength had been reduced by more than one third, how could they not be shocked and panic stricken! And at this moment, Qing Shui took out another talisman.

Heart Toxin Talisman!

This was a Talisman that he had not tested.

Qing Shui laughed looked at the Heart Toxin Talisman in his hand. The woman on it was still as enchanting as before. He took a look at the old man and wondered if the “heart attack” effect of the talisman would cause the old man to be embroiled in the pain of that man's past affections.

When Qing Shui had tested it, he remembered all the women who he felt guilty towards. There were also times where he saw visions where he was killed by Di Chen and Yiye Chuge.

After that, Qing Shui discovered that his Heart Toxin Talisman would stir the emotions of the victim and drown the victim in fear. The hallucinations could appear so real that anyone without a strong spiritual energy would be driven insane.

This Heart Toxin Talisman could be immensely effective in battle. The cost of being even slightly affected by it was a definite

death. More important, it was unavoidable, unless one possessed an incredibly high amount of spiritual energy.

AST 838 – The Effect Of The Heart Toxin Talisman, Two Hearts

Qing Shui threw out his Heart Toxin Talisman.

It was impossible to dodge the Heart Toxin Talisman, just like it was for the Descending Heavens Talisman. Therefore, even though Hu Langsha tried to dodge it, he was still hit. Then, stunned for a moment, his face immediately flushed red.

Qing Shui saw Hu Langsha's expression and was stunned too. To think that someone who was so old would have such an expression. This of one of extreme excite... Usually, one would only have such an expression when in his dreams, having sex with ladies he could never dream to touch. To think that this old man would have such an expression as well.

It seemed that the old man's spirit energy was ordinary as well. Everything happened in just an instant and Qing Shui shot out two Frosted Iron Balls with no hesitation. Twin Dragon Balls!

In this crucial moment, with Qing Shui having delayed a short moment earlier, the old man was able to dodge getting hit in critical spots but his shoulders and lower abdomen were pierced. Although the injuries were serious, they were not fatal.

The old man looked at Qing Shui. It was only now that a hint of surprise appeared in his eyes. This young man was a demon. To think that he was able to create illusions which could cause one to lose their minds.

“Kill!” Suddenly, with a loud bellow, the old man waved his hand.

The “Four-headed Red Jiao” which was in mid-air, pounced toward Qing Shui, its four huge heads spewing out thick crimson colored flames. At the same time, it whipped out its huge tail like a steel whip from behind Qing Shui.

Hu Langsha was considered to have been crippled. The other people in the surroundings were still drowned in the astonishing scene from earlier and had not sensed that Qing Shui had weakened them. They merely saw Qing Shui’s creepy Talisman Arts and terrifying Hidden Weapon Technique.

Standing on top of the Diamond Gigantic Elephant, Yun Duan realized that this man had been giving her too many astonishments throughout the day. What was his actual level? How had he been spending all these years? How could he be so powerful?

Although she did not understand, she was now especially surprised. Cloud Adventurer Guild was considered to have been saved. Herself, her family and the people from Cloud Adventurer Guild were now all safe. Wasn’t this her goal? In order to achieve this goal, she had not cared about pushing herself toward hell.

However, very quickly, she saw that huge Four-headed Red Jiao pouncing toward Qing Shui. Although she knew that he should be fine she still could not help but feel worried.

This feeling made her understand that unknowingly, he had already gotten ahold of her heart. To think that her heart was thumping as he moved, making her both happy and anxious.

Looking at the Four-headed Red Jiao which had pounced over, Qing Shui dashed up, dodging that whipping tail and then shot downward rapidly, performing the “Mountain Splitting Strike” with the Thunder God in his left hand.

This was one of the more powerful moves in Qing Shui’s “Hammer Techniques”. It specialized in attacking demonic beasts of a larger size. This was a tremoring attack which had a small area effect. The attack had a penetrating effect and could ignore the impact resistance of armor of a certain level.

Boom!

With the hammer swinging out at full force, even the Four-headed Red Jiao could not help but let out a horrified cry. It shot upward and once again spewed crimson colored flames toward Qing Shui. The four streams of crimson colored flames pounced toward Qing Shui like four huge fire pythons.

This time around, Qing Shui didn’t dodge them. He merely circulated his powers to their maximum level and circulating the Ancient Technique: Flames of Yin-Yang to its limits. When performing the primordial flames, he had to circulate the Ancient Technique: Flames of Yin-Yang.

Sword of Sixth Wave!

Boom boom...

The terrifying crimson colored flames hit Qing Shui's body but a strange scene occurred. Those flames seemed to have entered his body and his Big Dipper Sword slashed down on one of the Four-headed Red Jiao's heads.

With tremendous howl which pierced through the clouds, one of its huge heads was smashed, spouting out fresh blood ten meters upward which eventually fell down as rain.

Although the Four-headed Red Jiao would not die from losing just one of its heads, that immense pain would make it lose its cool and its battle prowess would also be raised slightly.

Qing Shui was not worried about this Four-headed Red Jiao at all. It was because things that were of the fire element had no impact on him. This huge demonic beast was quite strong but it was a pity that he was its opponent. It was quickly killed by Qing Shui without even being able to unleash 30% of its prowess.

As the huge Four-headed Red Jiao fell to the ground, the earth trembled. It also announced the end of the battle and spelled the demise of the Hu Wei Adventurer Guild.

Of course, Cloud Adventurer Guild also gained attention immediately. People were also concerned about Miss Yun Duan's

man. Where did this guy come from? How strong is he? ...

The old man was already dead. It could be because when he saw that the Four-headed Red Jiao was not a match for Qing Shui, he knew what would become of himself. Although he could not accept this ending, he had no other choice.

Having entered into seclusion training, what had welcomed him on the first day he came out was death. He had thought that this time he came out, Hu Wei Adventurer Guild would become more powerful once again and even control the entire Heavenly Beast City.

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Qing Shui put the Four-headed Red Jiao's corpse into the Realm of the Violet Jade Immortal. As for the others, other people will take care of them.

Yun Duan leaped down from the Diamond Gigantic Elephant and quickly ran over to Qing Shui, "Are you alright?"

Looking at this lady who was full of concern for him, Qing Shui smiled, "I'm fine. Everything here has been taken care of. Let's go back!"

"Mmm!" Yun Duan smiled and nodded.

Qing Shui put away the Diamond Gigantic Elephant and called

out the Fire Bird.

This time around, Qing Shui hesitated about whether he should pull her up without saying a word. He had forgotten that Yun Duan was an elementary Martial Saint and could fly. However, he seemed to have neglected this issue.

However, just then, Yun Duan smiled and reached out her hand for Qing Shui. Her face that was like white jade had a hint of a flush to it. She didn't lower her head but forced herself to look into Qing Shui's eyes.

That resisting yet welcoming expression made Qing Shui's heart skip a beat. He could not help but think of how a lady's beauty is more fatal when it's released unintentionally. It could really draw one to their death.

"So beautiful!" Qing Shui pulled her up by her hand and leaped up while the Fire Bird flew below them. The two of them landed on the Fire Bird and then flew toward Cloud Adventurer Guild.

The Fire Bird's speed was stable and did not fly fast this time around. The battle had just ended and Qing Shui needed to calm his heart. This process was very important toward cultivators.

When he was at the Hu Wei Adventurer Guild, Qing Shui's spiritual sense had encompassed the surroundings and he had even asked Yun Duan who the stronger people in Hu Wei Adventurer Guild were.

There would definitely be people he had missed and there could be quite a lot of them. After all, they had so many people and Qing Shui had not reached the stage where he had lost his sanity. However, those who managed to survive were also those that Qing Shui had decided to let off. There were already no powerful cultivators amongst them. Even if they wished to get up on their feet again, they would not be able to reach the same level without a few hundred years.

Even on the Fire Bird, Qing Shui didn't let go of Yun Duan's hand. Yun Duan let Qing Shui hold her hand. Something that neither she nor the Cloud Adventurer Guild had been able to accomplish, this man accomplished in less than half a day.

Even the most rational lady would have an emotional side to her. She now started to believe that she had an affinity with Qing Shui. She was also starting to believe what her grandfather had said before he had passed away.

Would she really have a relationship with him?

Yun Duan looked at Qing Shui in a daze. Although she was looking at Qing Shui, her mind was no longer on him. She was lost in her own thoughts.

However, when Qing Shui saw that she was looking at him in a daze, he could tell that she was lost in her thoughts. He slightly tightened his grip on her hand and smiled, saying, "Why are you staring at me like that? You want to eat me up?"

Yun Duan seemed to have been shocked to her senses and when she heard Qing Shui's words, she chided, "What's there about you that's good to eat?"

"You're very delicious!" Qing Shui smiled and said softly.

Yun Duan's body trembled a little but a hint of disappointment appeared on her face, "Do you look down on me?"

"Why would I?!" Qing Shui quickly said.

"I'm also forced to do this. I haven't liked anyone before. Every since the other time you... I haven't had any contact with other men..." Yun Duan's voice was very, very soft.

Qing Shui gently hugged Yun Duan. "Don't think too much. Having met each other again this time, it means that our affinity is there. In fact, ever since we met this time, I've not planned to let you leave me. It's because you can only be my woman."

"How can you be so domineering?" Yun Duan lifted her head shyly and mumbled.

Qing Shui put his hands around her waist, his heart very calm. He lowered his head gently and planted a kiss on her forehead, "Duan`er..."

This was the first time he had called her this. Even Qing Shui himself felt a little bit weird.

However, Yun Duan softly answered him and rested her head on his shoulder.

“Duan`er, back in Heavenly Palace, why did you agree to use yourself to make a deal with me?” Qing Shui asked.

Yun Duan’s body stiffened up before she said, “Feng Clan saved my life before and I’m indebted to them. Only by doing so could I leave. Feng Wuji has had his eyes on me for a long time. However, they knew that I came from Central Continent. If I didn’t do this, he’d definitely try to get his hands on me regardless of the means used.”

“Then do you regret it?”

Qing Shui smiled and looked at Yun Duan. Back then, he was astonished that this was her first time.

“You rascal. Thinking about it, it might be because I owed you in my previous life.” Yun Duan’s face was flushed red. To think that thinking about the past had made her feel slightly happy because the two of them had met once again.

“Duan`er, will you be my woman?” Qing Shui said softly next to her ear.

“I’m your woman!” Yun Duan put her hands around Qing Shui’s neck softly.

Qing Shui didn't stand on ceremony and kissed those red and moist lips, planting kisses all over her poised and dignified face. Before he knew it, his hands were already on her round and perky beautiful butt. That smooth and bouncy feeling made Qing Shui have a strong urge to eat her up immediately.

"Qing Shui!" Yun Duan gasped and called out to Qing Shui who was undressing her.

"Mmmm!" Qing Shui let go of her hand, with the other still in her clothes... He felt a little sorry. It could be because he hadn't touched any women for quite a while and could not hold back.

He thought that Yun Duan would reprimand him. But Yun Duan's reaction earlier was also quite big and she panted, her beautiful face appearing embarrassed, "We're going to arrive soon!"

Qing Shui took a look and saw that they were going to arrive at the Cloud Adventurer Guild soon. He grinned, saying, "Leave the door open for me tonight. I can't hold it in anymore..."

Such crude words made Yun Duan's flushed face even more tempting and a faint mist appeared in her beautiful eyes. She felt very complicated, slightly nervous, a little happy and there also seemed to be a slight hint of anticipation...

Qing Shui smiled, one hand still remaining in her clothes, thoroughly feeling her peaks. That wonderful feeling made Qing

Shui's heart itch.

AST 839 – Taking the Mysterious Fruit Once again

Qing Shui only let go of her hand with great reluctance when they had arrived above the Cloud Adventurer Guild, making Yun Duan speechless. This guy was really insatiable. To think that she had already let herself loose as it was.

Although he appeared to be very mature, Yun Duan felt that it could be because of her first impression toward him. In the battle earlier, he was very upright and reliable but when he stopped, she would keep thinking of how he was when they were back in Heavenly Palace. Back then, he already looked a little more mature for his age but he was still very much like a kid.

Therefore, she felt that she was slightly self-indulgent and had also allowed herself to indulge in him a little.

Thinking of how he was appearing to be like a greedy kid earlier...

Qing Shui and Yun Duan jumped down from the Fire Bird. There were still many people there, most of them from Cloud Adventurer Guild. Seeing that they had returned safely, they knew that the problem was solved.

However, Yun Clan and some of the core members of Cloud Adventurer Guild still rushed over. Although they had guessed what the result was, they still wanted to hear it directly from Qing Shui and Yun Duan.

“Father, mother, Hu Wei Adventurer Guild is gone now.” After saying this, Yun Duan hugged the beautiful woman with tears in her eyes.

Although she was silent, Qing Shui knew that she was crying. This stubborn lady was still a lady after all. It was just that she was stubborn and didn’t wish to show him her weaker sides.

A loud cheer spread out and many people left from Cloud Adventurer Guild to spread the good news. There was nothing that could be happier than this.

The few Elders from Cloud Adventurer Guild also took their leave. They had been worried about this previously since it didn’t only concern their own lives but also that of their families. This time around, they knew that their persistence had paid off.

It was not that people with a strong sense of righteousness were not afraid of death. No one was not afraid of death but it was a matter of whether the death was worth it. Moreover, if they were to remain alive, could they handle the responsibilities they had to bear, as well as could their consciousnesses handle it... In fact, for most people, it was just that they could not get past themselves.

Now, knowing that everything was fine, they could also put down the heavy burden in their hearts. Letting out a long exhale, the few old men left happily.

“[Esteemed nephew](#), come, let’s go back,” the learned and refined

looking man looked at Qing Shui happily and said.

Respectful address to someone from a younger generation. Does not have to be toward one who was related by blood.

Of course he could tell that this guy did not have a simple relationship with his daughter and he could also tell that his daughter liked this guy. The situation now was as if they had left hell and headed immediately for heaven.

The reason behind all the changes was because of this guy.

“Qing Shui, come, they are already preparing the food.” The beautiful married woman held Yun Duan’s hand and smiled while speaking to Qing Shui. She was now the happiest out of all of them. Children are the most important thing to mothers and if their children were not living well, the mothers would be the ones who felt worst. Right now, she did not know what to do on hearing this great surprise.

Yun Duan stood next to the beautiful married lady, throwing Qing Shui occasional glances, while wearing a faint smile. The refined man and the beautiful married lady, as parents, naturally noticed this scene.

However, this was something they wanted to see. Moreover, there was nothing about Qing Shui which they could complain about. Anyway, if it was not for this young man, everything would have been gone. They were satisfied with the current situation.

Qing Shui nodded and left for the inner hall with the Yun family.

There would naturally be people who would fix and reconstruct the hall in the Adventurer Guild.

“Brother Qing Shui, thank you very much,” Yun Yang smiled and said to Qing Shui.

Yun Chi also looked at Qing Shui happily.

“Brother Qing Shui, is my elder sister beautiful?” Yun Tong chuckled and asked.

“Of course she is. Is there a need to ask?” Qing Shui smiled and replied. Now, everyone’s mood was relaxed and thus their conversations were much lighter too. They could even bring up less stressful topics.

“Brother Qing Shui and my elder sister are such a good match.” Yun Tong grinned, appearing to be very honest and straightforward. However, it was hard to link that handsome appearance to a person who was very honest.

“Younger brother, if you’re going to continue with that crap, you can have sword practice with me in a while,” Yun Duan chided.

“Alright, alright, I’ll stop.” Yun Tong quickly said. He had no intention of being a punching bag.

Qing Shui did not see Yun Duan’s eldest brother. The latter probably was too embarrassed to appear before him. It might be

good to let him stay away for a while. He tossed this thought aside. This was Yun Clan's family issues. He was neither in the mood nor was there a need for him to be bothered with this.

The dishes served were quite extensive. It was late and it was dinner time. Yun Peng and the beautiful married woman casually asked about Qing Shui's family situation. If they didn't it would appear as if they didn't show any interest but if they were to probe too much, it would make him feel uncomfortable. Therefore, they only asked a few casual questions. However, Qing Shui replied more since they would be able to get a better understanding about the situation without them asking too much.

Toward Qing Shui's courtesy, Yun Peng, the beautiful married woman and the people from Yun Clan were all very happy.

They had an enjoyable meal together and the atmosphere was very good. When one was in a good mood, anything would taste delicious. They finished the dinner about two hours later.

Everyone departed after the meal and Yun Duan was naturally the person to bring Qing Shui to his room. However, thinking of Qing Shui's words during the day, she felt a little nervous and uneasy.

Walking out of the hall, Yun Duan led Qing Shui to the building. Although it was dark at night, the moon and stars in the sky as well as the light stones all around lit the place up.

Unknowingly, they held each other's hands and slowly walked to

the other building. While it was a short distance away, they took a very long time to walk over.

“Qing Shui, how long will you be staying here?” Yun Duan smiled and asked softly.

“About three to five days. Or maybe I’ll leave tomorrow,” Qing Shui gave it some thought and said. He didn’t want to lie to her. He wanted to head to Eastern Victory Divine Continent to look for medicinal herbs. Of course, if there was Sky Penetrating Grass which was 5,000 Years or older, he didn’t mind staying here longer.

Clearly, Qing Shui’s reply was within Yun Duan’s expectation. She was not surprised and merely smiled and answered, “Will you come back and look for me in the future?”

After making their relationship clear, the two of them were now much more intimate in their conversation. Qing Shui only said this because he wouldn’t be staying long. Moreover, they had been very intimate on the Fire Bird, with her being the one to express her feelings first.

“I will. You’re my woman. If I’m alive and have time, I’ll come and visit you,” Qing Shui smiled and said.

“Don’t be saying such unlucky stuff.” Yun Duan covered Qing Shui’s mouth and said seriously.

They walked into the building. She stayed in this place alone. The building was not very big, with only three levels in total. There were no rooms on the first level. There was only a hall, kitchen, bathroom and such.

“Qing Shui, you can go look for a room on the second floor. I’ll go take a bath...” After walking into the hall, Yun Duan said to Qing Shui.

“Let’s have a bath together. I want to have one too...”

Before Yun Duan could reply, Qing Shui picked her up and headed for the bathroom.

“Qing Shui...” Yun Duan called out a few times shyly and then entered the bathroom with Qing Shui smirking.

The bathroom was neither very big nor very small. There was a big bathtub which was six feet long and wide and four feet deep. Qing Shui filled up the tub.

Looking at the flushed red lady in his arms, Qing Shui noticed that he was slightly agitated at this moment. He found it funny himself. He knew that this was because he was not that familiar with this lady, although they had spent a night together previously.

Qing Shui was still carrying Yun Duan but he was already kissing her lips while his hands started to remove her clothes!

It might be because she knew that Qing Shui was going to leave very soon that Yun Duan didn't resist too much and let him do as he wished. Very quickly, they were both undressed.

She had beautiful snow-white skin and a graceful and curvy figure.

She was warm to the touch and the tender feeling made Qing Shui enchanted. He released the slightly reddened lips and carried her into the bathtub.

The water in the bathtub only reached up in their chests, leaving Yun Duan's upper body above the water. Qing Shui could not control himself and grabbed the snow-white and well-rounded peaks.

Yun Duan's face turn slightly red from her blush and with the heat from the steam. She let out steamy gasps and there was an indescribable charm added to this graceful lady.

Qing Shui could not hold back the urge and embraced her, connecting with her.

.....

Qing Shui looked at the lady sleeping in his arms who had a hint of satisfaction on her beautiful face. He thought of how he had wanted her many times over the night. To think that such a

graceful lady would also have such a crazy side to her. It might be because he wouldn't be staying for long that she only fell asleep a short while ago.

Qing Shui looked at the sky. It was already late in the night. He dared not move for fear of waking up the beauty in his arms.

It was only after Yun Duan was deeply asleep that Qing Shui entered the Realm of the Violet Jade Immortal.

“Mmm, the second Mysterious Fruit is also mature now.”

Qing Shui looked at the two Mysterious Fruits he now had. The ratio of the time flow in the Realm of the Violet Jade Immortal had increased once again, making it even faster for the medicinal herbs to grow. After some cultivation, Qing Shui planned to use the two Mysterious Fruits.

When there was only one of it, Qing Shui felt that the chances were too low. He was afraid that it would be too depressing should he fail.

He put both Mysterious Fruits next to him.

Qing Shui was still very agitated, if he was lucky enough, he might be able to breakthrough to the seventh heavenly layer. However, Qing Shui was not having such high hopes. He would be satisfied if he could get some advancement.

Although the Mysterious Fruit only had a 1% chance of success, this was only so for other people. Qing Shui didn't know what was the success rate for himself but it would definitely be higher than 1%.

He had the Realm of the Violet Jade Immortal which was tied together with his life. Just this alone would increase his success rate by quite a bit. Moreover, he also had the Nature Energy and the Unmoving Like A Mountain.

In fact, there was still one thing which had a close connection with success rate...

Comprehension!

Qing Shui felt that his comprehension level was still quite high. Otherwise, he would not have been able to enter epiphany for so many times.

After circulating the Ancient Strengthening Technique for one round, Qing Shui then circulated Unmoving Like A Mountain and even used an amplifying Heavenly Talisman, bringing the condition of his body to the best it could be.

His Nature Energy circulated automatically. There was also the Diamond Qi, Diamond Protection, Diamond Crossing Rivers and others...

He then took one of the Mysterious Fruits, tossing aside all

distracting thoughts, calming his mind and increasing the speed at which he was circulating the Qi of Ancient Strengthening Technique. He focused and tried to comprehend the power from the Mysterious Fruit in his body.

Time passed by slowly and Qing Shui didn't move at all. His hands formed signs as he slowly controlled the Qi of Ancient Strengthening Technique in his body slowly, gradually absorbing the power from the Mysterious Fruit.

Having experienced this one, Qing Shui tried his best to do what he did the previous time, trying hard not to let the power of the Mysterious Fruit to seep out of his body.

AST 840 – The Heart Of Roc In The Large Success Stage, Fated To Be

Everything seemed to be going very smoothly, at least more so than the previous attempt. Previously, he had felt that it was a little tough and he realized that the power of the Mysterious Fruit could seep out. And once it did, the power would be lost.

Qing Shui didn't know what it was like for others to take it but he felt that he should be absorbing the power of the Mysterious Fruit to the best of his ability. The more he absorbed, the higher the success rate and the greater the benefits he should get.

Gradually, the aura in Qing Shui's body slowed down. After a short moment, he abruptly opened his eyes, his face in a daze and then he broke into a delighted smile.

He has succeeded!

Now, Qing Shui realized that as long as he controlled it well, the success rate of the Mysterious Fruit was basically very high. It could even reach up to above 50%. The only thing was that it took a very long time for one Mysterious Fruit to mature and even with the current Realm of the Violet Jade Immortal, it would take over two years.

The success this time did not allow his Ancient Strengthening Technique to breakthrough to the seventh heavenly layer. However, one of Qing Shui's techniques leveled up. This surprise made Qing Shui feel overjoyed.

It was because the Mysterious Fruit had let Qing Shui's Heart of Roc reach the large success stage...

Toward the end, when Qing Shui sensed that his spirit energy had increased several times, he knew that his Heart of Roc might be reaching a breakthrough. It was because a huge increase to his spirit energy could let the prowess of the primordial flames increase directly.

As expected, when he saw the large success stage for the Heart of Roc lit up in his consciousness, he was happy beyond what words could describe. It was because the Roc form's battle techniques require very harsh requirements to reach the large success stage. The time required was not short and it also required talent, opportunity and a high level of comprehension.

At the large success stage, the Heart of Roc could allow Qing Shui's abilities to increase by several times. It was because Qing Shui had the Hidden Weapon Technique and could fully unleash the prowess of the Heart of Roc.

It could increase the prowess of the primordial flames by five times. Just thinking about it made Qing Shui extremely agitated. What would five times the prowess be like? The prowess of the primordial flames could already become Qing Shui's great weapon previously and now, it has exceeded the majority of Qing Shui's other attacks.

It would not even lose out to the poison weapons which had been

tempered with the five-colored poison. Poison weapons were expendable and would decrease in numbers after each use. They also require the help of the Hidden Weapon Technique and there were great restrictions. In all, it was not as good as the primordial flames.

The Primordial Flame Ball depleted a large amount of energy but was convenient. It was also very flexible and could even be condensed to form into the shape of a sword whose prowess was not to be undermined. Qing Shui could also channel the prowess of the primordial flames through some mysterious items.

It was like how, in the past, in Hundred Miles City, he could use the Gold Needles to channel the primordial flames and incinerate the heart of a Xiantian cultivator. He did not know if the Gold Needles could still handle the primordial flames as they were now.

The primordial flames could refine everything in the world but for some things, time was required. For example, in order to refine the 10,000 Years Coldsteel Needles, it would take the current primordial flames some time to accomplish things. To be able to refine everything in the world did not mean that it was something that could be accomplished immediately. Moreover, there are many mysterious things in the world which have a strong resistance for fire or are things that fire could not get close to.

Fire Repelling Pearl!

Legend has it that it was of a similar existence to the Water Repelling Pearl. It has a natural resistance toward fire and flames that got near to it would be pushed away. Other than the Fire

Repelling Pearl, it was also said that there were the Earth Repelling Pearl, Wood Repelling Pearl, Metal Repelling Pearl, Thunder Repelling Pearl...

The five elements contradict each other and each of them was a treasure that was hard to come by. Qing Shui even returned his only Water Repelling Pearl to that old turtle.

Therefore, no matter how powerful the “fire”, when it comes across something that contradicts it, its prowess would also be diminished slightly. There were things that required a very long time to refine and could even take years.

Qing Shui thought of his Big Dipper Sword. He was not sure what material the Big Dipper Sword was made from but he knew that the previous primordial flames were not able to affect the Big Dipper Sword even after burning it for some time.

Therefore, he felt that the Big Dipper Sword might just be a great treasure.

“I have the 10,000 Years Coldsteel! I can give this a try. I wonder how long it would take to refine the 10,000 Years Coldsteel.” Thinking of this, Qing Shui was full of anticipation.

He had the 10,000 Coldsteel Needles which he had forged and thus there was no need to prepare other materials.

Taking in a deep breath, Qing Shui stretched out his hands to be

parallel to the ground and started circulating the Ancient Technique Flames of Yin-Yang and his Qi of Ancient Strengthening Technique. Very quickly, a 6 foot long grey colored flame appeared in his hands...

This astonished Qing Shui. To think that it had improved by so much. Gradually adjusting his control, the primordial flames in his hand now continued to expand and contract with a throbbing temperature. Even the air was burned, leaving behind a black hole.

“How powerful!” Qing Shui smiled and could not help but exclaimed.

Qing Shui then started to gradually condense it. This was a technique and a process and in this process, he needed to be able to reduce the time spent to the shortest limit. Only then would it bring him more advantages when he was facing enemies.

With prior experience, he got the hang of it very quickly. However, when it was condensed to the size of an adult's head, it had reached its limit and could not be condensed any more. Qing Shui sensed the two large flame balls in his hands which encompassed a terrifying temperature and prowess within.

Go!

Qing Shui tossed them out into the air!

The two grey colored flame balls that were the size of a human head collided, creating a tremendous explosion. The sky turned black for a moment before immediately recovering. Qing Shui knew that even if his opponent managed to survive the explosion, he would be devoured by the darkness.

Drawing out a 10,000 Years Coldsteel Needle and then channeling in his primordial flames, the 10,000 Years Coldsteel Needle which was as thin as a cow's hair disappeared in the time it took for one to take a breath. Although it was very fine, it was made from 10,000 Years Coldsteel.

The time it took for one breath was sufficient. Qing Shui was very happy. If he could use it, it would only be a moment as well. Actually, what Qing Shui needed was not its resistance to high temperatures but he needed the material to be able to conduct quickly and it must also be tough enough. Otherwise, it would not even be able to pierce through experts' flesh. Moreover, if he could hang on for just a short while, he could increase the penetrating impact of the 10,000 Years Coldsteel Needles.

Qing Shui thought of forging some slightly thicker 10,000 Years Coldsteel Needles. Being thin, the 10,000 Years Coldsteel Needle could be used to break through the defences of some experts. After all, being able to gather strength into one point would allow an increase in prowess.

However, who would be able to unleash their entire strength within a needle which was thin as a cow's hair? Therefore, while everyone understood this theory, Qing Shui had yet to come across one who could put it into practice.

Qing Shui has been cultivating the Solitary Rapid Fist for many years and had even entered a state of epiphany once. Moreover, this was an ancient battle technique and he had only the achievements today because of the the ratio of the time he had in the Realm of the Violet Jade Immortal as well as him having an extraordinary perseverance.

Ordinary people would not be able to use Coldsteel Needles which were thin as a cow's hair but Qing Shui could do it. It just took him some practice. In his hands, they could be miraculous needles which saved lives but they could also be fatal needles which robbed people of their lives.

In the remaining time, Qing Shui tried to practicing controlling his Primordial Flame Balls, trying his best to be able to condense them even smaller and to be able to do so in a shorter amount of time.

All in all, Qing Shui was very satisfied with the Mysterious Fruit's effects this time around. After all, if a person were to continue to cultivate his Heart of Roc under normal circumstances, it would probably take the person at least ten years to break through to the large success stage. It would also require encounters and luck. He felt that he must have gotten a streak of luck this time around.

This made Qing Shui turn toward the last Mysterious Fruit. He had wanted very much to eat it. Maybe it would really bring him to the 7th heavenly layer...

Dreams were beautiful but reality was harsh. Regardless if it was medicinal pills or heavenly and earthly treasures, there would be a buffer period. The better the item, the longer the buffer period. Therefore, for something like the Mysterious Fruit, it would be about at least half a year. Moreover, the shorter the duration between both consumptions, the shorter the success rate would be.

To Qing Shui, this would only be a few days time.

Now, Qing Shui was thinking about whether he should be using it for himself or refine it into a Fate Pill. He was not able to use the Fate Pill for himself and if he were to refine it, it would be for the people around him.

In the end, Qing Shui decided to leave it for now. He might have an urgent need for it later. In his remaining time, he focused on his cultivation.

Right now, his happy mood had made him temporarily toss away all other thoughts. The breakthrough for the Heart of Roc caused Qing Shui to feel slightly arrogant...

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Feeling satisfied, he left the Realm of the Violet Jade Immortal. The sky was just starting to turn bright. Qing Shui had spent half the time in the Realm of the Violet Jade Immortal. When he left, Yun Duan was still deep in sleep but he knew that she was going to wake up soon.

Martial arts practitioners were light sleepers and would be able to sense motions and the time they slept was also very short. It might be because she was with him or that it had been too tiring that she was now sleeping so soundly. He walked over softly, sat by the bed and looked at this lady whom he thought would pass by in his life forever. Even now, he still had the feeling that he was in a dream.

If they had not met, Hu Wei Adventurer Guild would definitely wipe them out completely. This stubborn lady would definitely not take the initiative to look for him, nor would she think that he would be able to solve a problem like this. This was fate. They had met and it was before this problem had arisen.

Therefore, even Qing Shui who did not believe in fate and affinity felt that this lady was blessed to him by the heavens. It was all fated.

Just then, Yun Duan opened her bright eyes. When she saw Qing Shui, her eyes twitched a little. Her long lashes were like small fans and were very beautiful. She was covered in a thin snow-white blanket, giving her an additional sacred feeling. Together with the bedsheets under her, she appeared very dignified and he could not help but think of how he had embraced her her last night.

Qing Shui smiled and reached his hands in, “You’ve waken up? Why don’t you sleep a little longer?”

“Ahhh, how am I going to sleep with you like this...?” Yun Duan tried to dodge Qing Shui’s hand and chided.

After Yun Duan begged to be let off, Qing Shui smiled and gave her a kiss before leaving. He was still going for his morning practice as usual and when he walked out of the building, he saw a bamboo forest.

Green bamboo!

There was quite a large space amidst the tall bamboo forest. When Qing Shui drew in, he realized that the Nature Energy in his body that was automatically circulating was now even faster than before. It was even starting to absorb the Nature Energy in the surroundings, albeit at a very slow rate.

“Hmmm? What is this?”

Qing Shui was now astonished by this scene. When he came across the unknown, he would first feel worried, even if it was something good. Misfortunes and fortunes usually came hand in hand. Suddenly, Qing Shui’s gaze fell on the bamboo forest in front of him.

Between broken rocks striking my root deep, I bite the mountain green and won’t let go.

[From whichever direction the wind leaps, I remain strong, though dealt many a blow.](#)

A Chinese poem written by a Qing Dynasty artist by the name of Zheng Xie on his painting of bamboo and rocks. The English

translation was done by Zheng Banqiao, an official in the Qing Dynasty. The latter was also apt in calligraphy and painting as well as in the area of literature.

Unbending and rising steeply from level ground, how strongly they tower into the sky...

[The bamboo](#) has the most unflinching righteousness!

The bamboo has always been seen as a symbol of integrity and righteousness.

Could it be that bamboo could nurture his Nature Energy?

AST 841 – Qing Shui And Yun Duan's Wedding

He didn't feel it last time, even though he had walked past the bamboo forest a couple of times before. Back then, his Nature Energy hadn't reached the sixth level yet, so naturally the Nature Energy didn't manage to circulate automatically. He didn't notice any special attributes either.

Qing Shui had a sudden epiphany and quickly entered the Realm of the Violet Jade Immortal towards the field of plum blossoms. He didn't notice it before but nurturing the Nature Energy in this area felt distinctly faster than in the real world. However, when he went out of the realm, he realized that the field of plum blossoms would prove to be insufficient. He still required the plum blossoms to brew the Plum Blossom Wine, so if he were to cultivate his Nature Energy there, the plum blossoms would exhaust their essence, turning into something less than an ordinary flower.

Because of his usual morning training, he was able to discover the absorption of the Nature Energy from his surroundings unexpectedly. Qing Shui felt like he should give the Nature Energy a shot!

This was a bamboo forest situated in a nearby decorated park. Each bamboo stalk ranged in thickness from that of a child's arm to that of an adult's arm, standing tall in a even-spaced distribution. Qing Shui felt great as he entered the bamboo forest calmly.

He decided to see if the bamboo was affected if he tried to

cultivate his Taichi Fist while surrounding himself with the bamboo forest. However, he hesitated when he realized that he would soon leave this place in a few days. Doing so might not yield an instant result either.

A line of red light peeked from the horizon, indicating the rising sun from the east. Qing Shui faced the east and slowly circulated his Qi while performing a series of Taichi Fists casually amongst the bamboo forest. The flow of his movements was as smooth as a running river, yet his movements seemed exaggerated, as if he was milling flour at times.

In the midst of his training, Yun Duan was already up and observing from the second floor without any intention of disturbing Qing Shui. When she realized there wasn't any food in the room, she went to the nearby kitchen to prepare breakfast for the two of them.

Qing Shui finally stopped after an hour of continuous training. He found that the bamboo had little effect on him, almost insignificant, to be honest. Despite that, Qing Shui still felt that there was a shred of hope to this method of training.

This were merely ordinary bamboo. If he were to train amongst a forest of bamboo with extraordinary effects, like a bamboo forest of a few thousand years, would he be able to yield better results?

A bamboo forest of a few thousand years would be extremely rare. Because generally, bamboo would not live more than a thousand years. Moreover, if he had planted the bamboo of extraordinary effects in the Realm of the Violet Jade Immortal, the

bamboo forest would require only a few years to flourish.

Using his spiritual sense, he noticed there was no difference or changes occurring to the bamboo. He had an inkling that the bamboo would require three days – or less than that – to recover its effect. He could essentially train in the bamboo forest for a three to five days to cultivate his Nature Energy.

When he got back to the building, Yun Duan was already up. She had left the room and was nowhere to be seen. Just when he had decided to make breakfast for the both of them, Yun Duan came in while holding some freshly cooked dishes on a tray covered with an embroidered cloth. The delicious aroma of the food travelled through the room, causing Qing Shui to salivate with hunger.

“Qing Shui, come and eat breakfast!” Yun Duan called out to Qing Shui happily as she served the dishes on the table in the living room.

“Alright!”

Qing Shui gave a short reply and sat opposite Yun Duan while observing the dishes in front of him. Overall, it was a light and simple breakfast, with two bowls of plain porridge, two dishes of vegetables with a side of meat and two bowls of rice. Simple, yet delicate. This kind of breakfast was up his alley.

“You made this, right?” asked Qing Shui as he took over the chopsticks Yun Duan handed to him.

“Yeah, how did you know?” Yun Duan flashed a smile on her face.

“I can tell by your aroma in these dishes.” Qing Shui chuckled as he glanced over to Yun Duan.

“Eat!” Yun Duan picked up a piece of meat from the nearest dish and fed it into Qing Shui’s mouth.

“Qing Shui, I’ve never heard about the Sky Penetrating Grass of 5,000 years above. 5,000 Years medicinal herbs are extremely valuable but if you need them, you can try your luck in the capital of the Central Continent.” Yu Duan had already heard about Qing Shui’s intention of finding the Sky Penetrating Grass.

“No one will reveal such a valuable item easily. Most importantly, I don’t even know where I can find one in the wild. Even if the herb is below 5,000 years, I will still gladly take it.” Qing Shui frowned helplessly.

“You can forget about finding the medicinal herb in the Heavenly Beast City. You can try the larger medicinal stores or auction houses in the Central Continent’s capital. Perhaps you might find the herb there,” Yun Duan suggested after a brief moment of thought.

“Hmm, I can try that.” said Qing Shui. In any case, he would eventually pass the Central Continent, making it convenient for his journey. If the search in the capital was a bust, then he could try his luck in the Eastern Victory Divine Continent, where it was

rumored that people with special powers would gather. Moreover, there was a rumor that the rare heavenly treasures and valuables were abundant in the Eastern Victory Divine Continent as well.

After having breakfast, Qing Shui finally made up his mind and said, “Let’s go out today, how about it?”

“Alright!” Yun Duan said gleefully.

The reconstruction of the hall in the Cloud Adventurer Guild was scheduled to commence today. This sort of issue would be handled by the Elders instead, as they were more than capable of doing so. Ever since the incident, they had gained a lot of trust in the public’s opinion, as well as countless new members to their guild. Even though most of the new members were defectors of the former Mighty Tiger Adventurer Guild, Yun Duan was more than happy to welcome them as they would contribute to the future expansion of the guild. After all, humans were prone to make mistakes – some things were inevitable.

Moreover, the Cloud Adventurer Guild had also appointed some of the loyal members to fill in the crucial positions within the guild to avoid treacherous acts in the future.

Most importantly, the Cloud Adventurer Guild had gained a formidable support and protection. Qing Shui’s appearance had become the key to the reporter’s headline material due to the instant annihilation of the Grand Elder, Hu Yunlong, as well as Hu Langsha from Hu Clan. This young man had surpassed everyone’s expectations in just a few days.

The first kill may be a lucky attempt from a hidden attack but the succession of kills after that would prove otherwise. Only a fool would dare to look down on Qing Shui without the consideration of his accumulated achievements.

Qing Shui wanted this kind of reaction – he wanted to stun not only the outsiders but also his wife. He took the opportunity to clarify their relationship to everyone – that Yun Duan was his woman – so that no one would dare to stir up trouble with Yun Duan or the Cloud Adventurer Guild in the future.

Despite Yun Duan being an intelligent woman, she only realized Qing Shui's love for her after he had told her everything – including things he had done for her. This made her extremely happy. All those years of suffering were worth this moment.

The two of them walked out of the building and mounted on the Fire Bird, rode towards the Tiger Gorge Mountain. While flying in the air, they also took the time to view the scenery below.

“How is the situation in the Heavenly Palace now?” asked Yun Duan while they had some spare time riding on the Fire Bird.

“It's still alright. The Heavenly Palace is under my jurisdiction now,” said Qing Shui as he turned to look at Yun Duan.

“You are the Patriarch now?” Yun Duan exclaimed, shocked.

“Yes!”

Yun Duan revealed a smile. When she was still in the Greencloud Continent, the Old Ancestor of the Heavenly Palace was still an elderly man. Back then, Qing Shui was just a chief disciple. She didn't expect that he would eventually become the Patriarch of the Heavenly Palace.

“Qing Shui, tell me what has happened to you and the Heavenly Palace during those years.” Yun Duan was curious. She wanted to know more about Qing Shui, negative or positive – anything was fine.

Qing Shui didn't hold back and told her most of the major events he had been through, as well as the fact that he had a number of wives and children.

“You are a lucky guy. All the nice ladies seem to like you very much,” Yun Duan said with a smile.

“You are a nice lady too!” Qing Shui rubbed his nose and let out a snicker.

“If you come back next time, bring your children along. I want to see them. They must be beautiful,” Yun Duan giggled.

“Our child will be beautiful too!” Qing Shui chuckled.

Yun Duan blushed instantly after hearing those words.

“Do you think one is enough or should we have two?” Qing Shui asked gently.

“Two. Wait, I didn’t say I would make a child with you, dummy!” Yun Duan slipped up for a moment. Her face was flushed in red as she dodged Qing Shui’s gaze.

“If Duan`er says she wants two children, then I will make sure to make that happen. We will have to work hard from now on. There’s not much time left,” Qing Shui laughed teasingly.

Yun Duan gave the stink eye to Qing Shui for a while but quickly flashed a mesmerizing smile onto her face.

“Duan`er. Tomorrow we will send out some wedding invitations to your friends and the important figures of the Heavenly Beast City. We will have a ceremony in three days.” Qing Shui said with a determined tone after pondering for a while.

Yun Duan stared at him blankly, forgetting to speak for a brief moment.

“You don’t want it?” said Qing Shui softly as he carefully interrupted her train of thought.

“I do.” Yun Duan allowed herself a genuine smile. Her contented smile was as beautiful as the bright moon in the night sky.

“Duan`er, I am not a good man. I fell in love with a couple of women all at once but I still got you by my side in the end. You and the ladies at home are all my wives – not concubines. I may not be capable enough right now but soon I will. By then, we can all live together forever.” Qing Shui said apologetically with a heavy heart.

“Don’t say that. It is impossible for just one woman to tame you. If that was the case, you would have given up on that woman by now.” Yun Duan tried to cheer up Qing Shui while showing him a pleasant smile.

Qing Shui was shocked. This was the exact thought in his mind, as if she had spoken his mind. Regardless of who it was, it would be impossible for one woman to separate him from the other women. He didn’t expect that Yun Duan would be able to understand him on a deeper level.

“You understood my thoughts.” Qing Shui was still bewildered at the fact that she seemed to understand him well.

“Because we are the same, only that I am a woman – a traditional woman.”

The two had already dismounted from the Fire Bird and settled into their spot on a mountain peak. Qing Shui and Yun Duan strolled around while chatting idly. They knew that their time together would be cut short, probably after the wedding ceremony in three days time.

“Duan`er, take this Beauty Pellet. This can maintain your youth for another 30 years.” Qing Shui took out a Beauty Pellet and handed it to Yun Duan.

“Really?”

“When have I ever lied to you?”

Besides the Beauty Pellet, he had also saved other medicinal pills for her, like the Spirit Concentrating Pill, Aroma Concentration Pill, Great Revitalizing Pellet, Tiger Vitality Pill.....

Since she would soon become his wife, Qing Shui would naturally share everything with her. He gave her everything she needed to become stronger because he would be away for quite a while. If he didn't have a schedule, he would be able to increase her strength faster in a short amount of time.

In the afternoon, both of them returned to the Cloud Adventurer Guild and started sending out invitation cards to their wedding. In a short span of time, the news of Yun Duan and Qing Shui's wedding had spread to the whole city like wildfire.

In these past two days, almost everyone now knew Qing Shui's name by heart. The news of Mighty Tiger Adventurer Guild's annihilation was still the talk of the town but that was soon followed by the auspicious news of Yun Duan and Qing Shui's wedding.

Hosting a wedding ceremony in the World of the Nine Continents was considered rare. Most common folks would only organize a small banquet as that was the cheapest way to get married while publicizing their marriage. Those with substantial wealth or an influential position would choose to host a bigger banquet with family members and guests of authority, making their banquet as lively as they could.

“Brother-in-law, I should call you that from now on,” said Yun Tong as he flashed a grin at Qing Shui.

“We are a family now,” said Qing Shui.

“Brother-in-law, thank you so much. Not because you destroyed the Mighty Tiger Adventurer Guild for us but for making my elder sister smile again.”

“I’ve known your sister for many years, so we are meant to be with each other. Don’t mention it. Come, let’s go inside and have a drink. They’ve called us a few times already.” Yun Chi, Yun Yang and the others were waving at them enthusiastically.

Then in a flash, three days had passed.

The wedding invitations sent out by the Cloud Adventurer Guild were limited, yet there were more than anticipated that came to attend the ceremony. Essentially, almost all of the influential figures from the Heavenly Beast City had attended the wedding. However, there were some who had attended without an invitation. But that was fine as these attendees had brought

valuable gifts for the couple. In any case, the more people who came to the banquet, the merrier the atmosphere would be.

At least these people would be able to spread a positive news to their neighbors for once!

AST 842 – Requiem Grass, Arrival At The Central Continent's Capital

The number of people arriving at the Cloud Adventurer Guild was endless, as were the extravagant beast carriages and horse carriages in front of the guild. Some of the members of the Yun Clan and Cloud Adventurer Guild were stationed near the entrance to greet the guests as they arrived for the banquet.

The banquet only began when the sun was high in the sky. The spoils of war granted by the defeat of the Mighty Tiger Adventurer Guild were exceptional, resulting in a luxurious banquet consisting of thousands of tables in the guild hall. As such, the banquet could cater to both the prestigious and the commoners, with a few hundred tables allocated to the middle classes and the lower classes. Those who had finished their meal would be required to leave to accommodate the next batch of guests.....

Even though this procedure had pretty much annoyed the people of status, those feelings would eventually pass. In spite of that, the Cloud Adventurer Guild had gained a good reputation for doing that due to the public's distaste for the rich and wealthy. Naturally, the distaste for the rich was part of the human's basic instinct, especially in the case of the poor and those from modest households. Regardless, the Cloud Adventurer Guild had a good reputation to begin with, at least in the Heavenly Beast City.

Qing Shui and Yun Duan walked around and briefly greeted everyone at the guest tables. He refused to do it at first but he needed to remind them of his presence in the Cloud Adventurer Guild, so no one would dare cause trouble.

Qing Shui had received a substantial amount of spiritual energy after consuming the Mysterious Fruit. Not only would the force of his Primordial Flames become stronger, he would also be able to gain more control of his attacks that required an infusion of spiritual energy. If his spiritual energy became stronger, the suppression force of his aura would be greater as well.

Even though he was showing a smile on his face, his overall aura was as intimidating as an unsheathed sword. The sharpness was akin to that of a divine weapon – invincible and forceful.

“Here’s to you, City Lord, for attending our marriage ceremony. Because I have been busy dealing with my personal matters, I have let Yun Duan suffer for a long time. Luckily, she was treated kindly by the City Lord and everyone here. No one will dare to torment her in the future. As capable as I was, there were a few supreme aristocratic clans who had tormented me in the past. However, that is already over, as I have annihilated them completely. I admit that my temper was a flaw – I couldn’t resist the thought of putting them down once they had triggered it.” Qing Shui gulped down a cup of wine after he had finished. He was serious when he said that, yet with a smile to put everyone at ease.

These words didn’t seem excessive or arrogant when they came out of Qing Shui’s mouth. He was going to leave soon anyway, so he thought it was best that he explained his intentions as clearly as possible.

The City Lord was an old man, albeit not that old. He was from the well-known Guan Clan with a history as deep as the Heavenly

Beast City itself. The members of the Mighty Tiger Adventurer Clan would never provoke them and vice versa.

The members of the Guan Clan were undoubtedly wise, so they immediately understood Qing Shui's meaning. Moreover, when Qing Shui mentioned the annihilation of several aristocratic clans by his own hands, there were some who exclaimed in shock, further asserting that Qing Shui was a man to be feared and not to be provoked.

Some of them already knew about Qing Shui's accomplishments in the Greencloud Continent but had never seen him before until now. It was only through the occasional word of mouth that they were able to learn about the incidents in the Greencloud Continent. They were not particularly concerned with his matters since he wasn't from the Central Continent. After all, the chances of them meeting him in the rest of their lives were slim to none.

Yet, he was here. And they had finally realized how terrifying and powerful this young man was.

People with the same name were too common in the World of the Nine Continents. Furthermore, this was the Central Continent, one of the continents with the largest population in the entire world. They would have never thought that they would be able to meet the exact Qing Shui they had heard from the rumors. There were only a few who could truly become famous throughout the entire world, after all.

Of course, it was only when Qing Shui mentioned the annihilation of the supreme aristocrat clans that they realized he

was the protagonist of the rumors in the Greencloud Continent. Luckily, the Central Continent had the advantage of being situated in the heart of the earth, so they were well-informed of the happenings around the world. This was also the reason why the Central Continent could flourish with various businesses and bustle with visitors, travellers and traders. Moreover, most powerful warriors would gather in the Central Continent to set up a stronghold, signifying their dominance in the world of martial arts.

That was all Qing Shui needed to instill fear on the troublemakers. Doing so would prove to be disadvantageous, as destruction would pursue those of the great. In order to deflect himself from such disaster, Qing Shui had planned to hasten his progress towards the achievement of greater power.

The only things that brought him comfort were the advancement of the Heart of Roc towards the large success stage, his poisonous beings, poison beasts, poisonous weapons and the perfect synchronization of his demonic beasts. Essentially, he had nothing – and no one-to fear.

However, whenever he thought about the woman in the crystal coffin, he would become helpless. In the face of absolute power, he was impotent – retaliation was futile.

Spiritual Confinement?

Then it hit him, perhaps that woman was able to use the Spiritual Confinement on him, restricting his efforts to counter her attack. Was she a Spiritualist? Or was that part of the ability of

a Martial Emperor?

The Spiritual Confinement could be considered a powerful assault ability that could attack the mind of any living being. This attack wasn't as simple as a suppression force being released by a person of high power against a weak warrior but more like the sensation of being restrained by a pair of invisible, formless hands.

Now that he had greatly enhanced his spiritual energy, could he stand a chance against the Spiritual Confinement of hers?

Wild imaginings began to form in his head as he continued to conjure various speculations.

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The banquet lasted from the afternoon until late evening, when all the guests had left the hall in the Cloud Adventurer Guild. It was only then that Qing Shui and Yun Duan were allowed to leave and go back home. When they were back, Qing Shui realized the furniture inside their home had been swapped with new, giving the whole room a fresh atmosphere and outlook.

Nevertheless, this was an auspicious sign. Inside the newly furnished room, he glanced at Yun Duan beside him – she was wearing a long white dress that complimented her slender waist and her delicate body figure.

“Duan`er, let me hear you say ‘husband’.” Qing Shui quickly

picked up Yun Duan when he saw the sky almost turning dark as the dusk set in.

“Ah, what are you doing? It’s still daylight outside…….”

“Who said we must do it at night?” said Qing Shui as he locked his eyes on the woman whose tears were almost rolling down her delicate face.

Yun Duan was shocked but quickly buried her face in his chest. Qing Shui had become increasingly insatiable as they made love with each other almost every night until a few hours before dawn. According to him, that was the only way to assure the success of her pregnancy.

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The next day was Qing Shui’s departure to the Central Continent’s capital. Yun Duan held him tightly as she sent him out to the entrance.

“Can’t bear to let me go? I will come back for you soon.” Qing Shui gently patted Yun Duan’s back and smiled.

“I will always wait for you. Be careful when you’re out there alone.” Yun Duan was teary-eyed as she forced herself to reveal a smile for him.

“Don’t worry about me. Take care and don’t forget to cultivate

your strength. No one will come and cause trouble anymore. I hope the Cloud Adventurer Guild will progress to become a greater and better guild for everyone.”

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After they waved each other goodbye, Qing Shui mounted his Fire Bird and flew up into the air heading east at a fast pace. The view of Yun Duan and the members of the Cloud Adventurer Guild became distant, until they had disappeared completely from the horizon.

Nine Continents Steps!

According to Yun Duan, the Central Continent’s capital was located in the middle of the continent, slightly closer to the eastern region. Based on his calculations, he would be able to reach there within two months or so if he continued at the same speed and without rest.

The Central Continent was much larger in contrast to the other continents in the world. Despite the straight path towards his destination, there was still a long way before he could reach the capital. Even with a significant boost to the current speed and the Nine Continents Steps, he would still have a hard time calculating the exact time he required to travel through the entire Central Continent while mounted on his Fire Bird.

Donghua City!

A month later, Qing Shui had finally arrived at a place called the Donghua City, situated in the Eastern Park Country. This city could be considered the heart of the Central Continent as many people would gather here for various activities. Powerful warriors were rumored to be stationed in the heart of the Central Continent, not necessarily in the capital but usually somewhere nearby.

Throughout his journey, Qing Shui felt inner peace with himself – perhaps due to the surge in his power. He felt at ease travelling to unfamiliar places, unlike his past self, where he would constantly become insecure once he had stepped into the outside world.

This must be the courage that stemmed from being a highly skilled warrior.

Qing Shui's overall appearance was far from a standard martial warrior. From the public's perspective, he was nothing more than a handsome and attractive man wearing a set of embroidered clothes, garnering attention wherever he went, particularly from those of the opposite sex. In fact, Qing Shui seemed more like a scholar than a martial warrior from the way he dressed.

Even though martial arts was the primary focus in the World of the Nine Continents, scholars were still considered important figures amongst all practitioners. Some had successfully gained insights into the Dao solely with their knowledge of words – progressing from a scholar to a Dao cultivator. A scholar would be able to become a powerful warrior just by depending on their writing brushes, paper and ink stones. Speaking of which, Qing Shui was instantly reminded of the Realm of Drawing, which could

be one of the ways a scholar was able to gain an insight to the Dao.

Donghua City was the capital city of the Eastern Park Country. Even though there was nothing significant in the that country, it was still part of the 81 countries in the Central Continent. Nevertheless, Donghua City was considered the superior city among others in the Eastern Park Country.

When he lifted up his head, he could see a large arena nearby. Qing Shui decided to stop by this city for a while before continuing his journey. There was still quite a distance from here to the Central Continent's capital anyway.

This wasn't the first time Qing Shui had seen an arena situated on a wide street. The arena in the Martial God Street in the Southern Viewing Continent was much larger than this one and it was significantly elevated as well.

Since he knew no one in this part of the city and no one would recognize him, Qing Shui decided to approach the arena to have a look. Just then, he noticed two middle-aged men sparring with each other using swords. They seemed to be engaged in a heated fight as they locked their swords without a hint of distraction.

However, these two were not as strong as Qing Shui was – they had just reached the early stage of the Martial King realm.

Not far from the arena was a restaurant, so Qing Shui went in and filled his stomach with some food. After that, he went to the neighbouring medicinal stores and auction houses with the goal of

finding the Sky Penetrating Grass.

Throughout his journey, he would go into various cities to find the herb as long as the city was flourishing with businesses and commerce. He would go into the largest auction houses and medicinal stores to inquire about the medicinal herb. Although he could find some medicinal herbs he required for other alchemy recipes, Sky Penetrating Grass search was, however, to no avail.

This time was no different. However, he was able to retrieve a special herb for a remarkably low price.

The Requiem Grass!

Even though the supply of the Requiem Grass was scarce in the World of the Nine Continents, not many would use it for medicine refining. This was due to the rumors of it having a vicious effect on human beings. However, the Requiem Grass still had its uses, so most medicinal herb companies would usually keep a few in stock for a few years – or ten years even if none could be sold. Essentially, the smaller stores would not keep this kind of herb as it was not profitable in any way.

Requiem Grass was hard to come by, so Qing Shui bought them all straightaway.

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Before he knew it, one month had passed. After asking for

directions a few times, the Central Continent's capital was finally visible to his sight. He knew he was almost there when he saw three golden calligraphy words labelling this "Central Continent's Capital" on a large wall surrounding the city.

Qing Shui would be awestruck each time he saw those grandiose words on the wall because they didn't seem to be the work of a mere scholar. However, for that same reason, scholars were considered important in the World of the Nine Continents, albeit not as important as martial warriors.

The wall of the Central Continent's capital was moderately sized – it wasn't quite as tall as he had imagined. However, the capital's wall gave off an ancient yet dignified aura much stronger than that of the other cities. Qing Shui followed the crowd of beast carriages and went straight into the capital.

Business operations would always be the most flourishing near the gates of every city due to the interaction between the merchants and the visitors. Because of that, Qing Shui chose to walk on the grounds with the other visitors and beast carriages, instead of flying above in the sky towards the inner capital.

After he had entered the gates, Qing Shui realized there was a formless suppression force surrounding the entire city. From the gates towards the inner city, there was a straight, wide street paving the path towards countless cross-sections of area. The streets were paved with green stones that were arranged in the pattern akin to the scales of a carp, which gave him a feeling of indescribable splendour and magnificence.

AST 843 – Tang Manor Medicinal Hall, Tang Manor?

The road stretched very far out, with buildings on both sides of the huge street. The beast carriages passing by on the road created “da da” sounds and there were also all sorts of people passing by. There were people who were alone and also people who were in groups. There was a family of three, a couple who was whispering sweet nothings to each other, a party of adventurers...

When he looked at this scene while standing there alone, Qing Shui could not help but think of his family and Yun Duan whom he had just left two months ago.

“Uncle, please head to the biggest trader in medicinal herbs in the area.”

“Alright!”

The coachman replied and proceeded forward at quick pace with Qing Shui on board. He turned into an extremely wide street. Through the windows in the carriage, Qing Shui could see the buildings on both sides of the streets.

“Sir, we’ve arrived!”

Qing Shui paid the money and said, “Uncle, please wait here for a while. Take this money. I may still need to head elsewhere in a while. If you don’t see me coming out after an hour, you can

leave.”

The other party readily agreed.

Tang Manor Medicinal Hall!

Tang Manor?

Qing Shui suddenly thought of the few factions which were the most powerful in the Central Continent: Buddha Sect, Demon Gate, Tang Manor, Dragon Emperor Mountain, Sky City, Moon City...

While these factions could not all be of the same level, there were the top few in the Central Continent. This was especially so for the Buddha Sect, which was the symbol of Central Continent itself. This was a great clan with strong foundations and backings. It was said that even the branches of the Buddha Sect were all extremely powerful existences.

Huoyun Liu-Li's parents were at Demon Gate. Qing Shui also knew of how powerful it was and thus he was still not able to bring her to the Demon Gate for now. Today, he came across this Tang Manor Medicinal Hall.

That Tang Manor was probably the only one in Central Continent who would dare to use the words 'Tang Manor'!

Having been viewed on similar standings with Demon Gate, Tang

Manor shouldn't be that weak themselves. After a short moment in a daze, Qing Shui headed in. The medicinal hall had its own shop but it dealt largely with wholesaling of medicinal herbs.

However, medicinal halls of such a level usually engaged doing vast quantities of business in large market. The medicinal herbs here were of greater quality and were basically those of 500 Years or higher. There were those which were 1,000 Years, 2,000 Years and even quite a few which were 3,000 Years. This was the difference between a normal medicinal hall and those which belonged to major factions.

Qing Shui walked into the shop. It was a big shop with a length and width exceeding two hundred meters. It was like a department store from his previous life but it just appeared simpler.

There was a platform covered in golden colored cloth, with huge rows of luxurious and neat looking shelves behind it. On the shelves, there were boxes of various sizes and there were no less than ten cultivators who were on guard in the hall.

However, in one look, Qing Shui saw an old man sitting in the corner, reading a book. It was a plainly dress old man but Qing Shui knew that the level of this old man was definitely stronger than him.

Just as Qing Shui saw the old man, the latter lifted his head to look at Qing Shui, as if he had a lot of things on his mind. After his old eyes came into contact with Qing Shui, he seemed to be astonished but quickly regained his composure.

Qing Shui sensed that this old man should be the actual person who was guarding the place. The other guards were probably just there to maintain a front.

Very quickly, a middle-aged man welcomed him and said politely to Qing Shui, “Sir, is there anything I can help you with?”

“I need a medicinal herb. Do you have a complete collection of medicinal herbs here?” Qing Shui smiled and asked.

“Haha, I’m not bragging but if you can’t find the medicinal herb in Tang Manor Medicinal herb, you won’t be able to find it elsewhere either.” The man said with great confidence.

He was truly not bragging. Qing Shui smiled and nodded, “Do you have the Sky Penetrating Grass? It’s best if it’s one that is at least 5,000 Years.”

The man was still trying to recall if they had any Sky Penetrating Grass but when he heard the request was one that was 5,000 Years, he was stunned. He could remember clearly all the medicinal herbs in Tang Manor Medicinal Hall which were 5,000 Years or above but Sky Penetrating Grass wasn’t one of them.

After thinking for a short while, the man looked at Qing Shui and said seriously, “We don’t have the medicinal herb that you’re looking for here. I consider myself to know quite a lot about medicinal herbs but I’ve never heard of the Sky Penetrating Grass which you have mentioned.”

Qing Shui was mentally prepared and had also expected this answer. However, he still felt disappointed. However, thinking of how the Sky Penetrating Grass might not be called by the same name in the world of the nine continents, Qing Shui quickly took out paper and brush.

In the alchemy recipe, there was not only a description of the Sky Penetrating Grass but also a picture of it. It was a pity that Qing Shui was the only one who could see it. Now, his painting skills had already reached an extremely high level.

When Qing Shui quickly drew out the picture of the Sky Penetrating Grass, the people in the surroundings were extremely astonished. To think that this young man had this ability. The medicinal herb in the painting appeared to be old and strong and its sharp feature were clearly portrayed on the paper. However, it also gave the feeling of bleakness and loneliness.

“Lad, you have great painting skills!”

Just then, the old man who had been holding onto a book all this time walked over. When he saw Qing Shui’s painting, he could not help but gave his compliments. When he saw this young man’s masterpiece, he could not help but walk over. He knew that he had underestimated this young lad.

“Sir, you flatter me! I don’t deserve this,” Qing Shui smiled and greeted him. He knew that this old man was much stronger than him.

“You deserve it. I’ve seen quite a number of artists and am also one who likes paintings. There’s no need for you to be so humble. You’re looking for the Sky Penetrating Grass?” The old man looked at Qing Shui and smiled saying.

Qing Shui was not overly humble since it would make people feel that he was being fake. He nodded and said, “That’s right. I wonder if you know where they can be found?”

Just as the old man was about to say something, a young man quickly ran in. Upon seeing the old man, he said, “Grandfather, elder brother has competed in martial arts with someone else and has been hit in a vital spot. He’s now on the verge of his death.”

“Lad, I’ll need to excuse myself for a moment.” After saying that, the old man was about to leave with the young man.

“Let me go with you. It just so happens that I have some medical skills.” Qing Shui followed behind.

“Then I’ll thank you.” The old man took the young man by the hand and moved on at great speed.

Qing Shui’s speed was still acceptable and thus he followed behind closely. As they went along the street at great speed, they came across a luxurious manor not long later.

When he saw the majestic looking words written on the sign, he

was also astonished. It was because the words “Tang Manor” was no less impressive than the words he had seen in Central Continent previously.

The old man and young man stopped at the door and Qing Shui also stopped next to them. The reason he had followed them was because he felt that the old man might have Sky Penetrating Grass or at least, he should know about it.

The other good thing about it was that Tang Manor and Demon Gate belonged to the same circle. It might proved to be useful in the future. Therefore, since he had this chance today, he should strengthen the ties.

“Lad, let’s go in!”

The old man said to Qing Shui and quickly entered.

Qing Shui answered. At this moment, he still didn’t neglect him. This made Qing Shui full of admiration for the old man’s calm and his social skills. It was because Qing Shui could tell that he was anxious but yet he could still afford to deal with this person who was not related to him at all.

Qing Shui had not the time to take a close look at the luxurious manor. Doing so at such a time was showing disrespect to the master of the house.

Qing Shui continued to think as he walked, wondering what

status this old man with a hint of celestial aura had in Tang Manor. Since he was usually at the Tang Manor Medicinal herb shop, he must know quite a bit about medicinal herbs. At least, he should be quite a good alchemist.

Otherwise, the young man would not be in such a hurry to look for him.

Passing by a few corridors, turning into a courtyard, they came across quite a number of people. When they saw the old man, all of them addressed him as Fifth Master. When they entered the courtyard, they saw many people entering and leaving the place.

“Make way, grandfather is here,” the young man said as he rushed forward.

Hearing the young man’s words, everyone immediately made way. Qing Shui followed the old man into the room. The room was filled with a faint stench of blood and medicinal herbs. In the center of the hall, there was a young man breathing weakly while lying down on a bed.

There were many people around him, of all ages. There were even some old men who were carrying medicinal boxes!

The young man seemed to be in his thirties or forties but his face was so pale that there was no hint of blood in it. His eyes were closed tightly, his clothes covered with traces of blood. The old man quickly went over.

“Fifth Master!”

“Fifth Master!”

“Grandfather!”

“Father!”

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“Father, you must save Chong`er!” a middle-aged beautiful married woman cried and said when she saw the old man.

A middle-aged man next to her quickly pulled her away, “Stop making trouble. Would father not save Chong`er?”

The old man sat down, frowning as he looked at the young man on the bed. He checked his pulse and touched the young man’s neck before saying, “Who did this?”

When the old man said this, a strong surge of aura burst out. It was only now that Qing Shui knew how terrifying the old man was.

“Someone from Dragon Emperor Mountain!” The young man from before sighed and said.

Qing Shui didn't say anything, despite being very astonished to be coming across the name of another powerful faction. It was really lively in the Central Continent.

On hearing the name Dragon Emperor Mountain, the old man's aura calmed down. "Chong'er's organs have been seriously damaged and have moved. Even his vitality has been cut off. Even if you find the best alchemist in Central Continent here, without a miraculous medicine which can bring one back to life, there's no way to save him."

The people from Tang Manor had already heard the same reply from not less than 20 alchemists. Now, hearing the same reply again from the old man, everyone fell silent. The beautiful married lady from earlier broke into tears once again.

Qing Shui also looked at the person who was on his deathbed. It was just like what the old man had said. Not only were serious injuries dealt to his organs, he had no more hint of vitality in him and there were even many parts in his meridian channels which were broken off.

The old man saw that Qing Shui was looking seriously at the bed. His brows twitched and he asked, "Lad, you have a way to save him?"

Qing Shui was also thinking about it. For an existence like the Tang Manor, with such a huge medicinal hall, by rights, they should also have something which could bring one back to life. However, after giving it more thought, since the old man was not the head of the family, with so many descendents in the clan, even

if some of them were to die, they wouldn't have a chance to take it. After all, even for an existence like the Tang Manor, they wouldn't have much of such stuff.

“I might not be able to cure him.”

Hearing Qing Shui's words, everyone was stunned. Earlier on, no one could be bothered to ask who this young man was but to think that this young man was saying that he might not be able to save the patient despite the old men who had been conducting alchemy and providing treatment for hundreds of years said that there was no cure. This meant that the chances were still high for him to be saved.

After being stunned for a short moment, the old man stood up and said, “I'd like to ask for your help. No matter whether you can save him or not, I'll reward you tremendously.”

AST 844 – Saving, Miraculous Physician, Making Friends

“Sir, there’s no need to stand on ceremony. I’ll do my best.”

Many people looked at Qing Shui doubtfully, not understanding why the old man would believe this young man’s words and had even promised that he would be rewarded heavily regardless of whether could save the young man or not. Qing Shui then said that he would do his best, making some people feel that he was some quack who was here to scam money.

“The young man doesn’t know how big the world is!” An old man carrying a medicine box sighed and said.

“Old Liang is right. Fifth Master must have been too flustered. Can’t he tell that this young man can’t possibly be that skilled. Could it be that our few hundred years of experience with medicine and medicinal skills can not be compared with his ten plus years of experience?” A silver haired old man said, his tone sounding very dissatisfied.

“Let’s just wait and see. Old Liang, Old Yin, this young man will definitely say that he has no way out. After all, other than miraculous medicine, how else could one cure these injuries? If he can really save him, I, Huang Yang, will be willing to respect him as my teacher,” an arrogant old man also said, dissatisfied.

.....

“Enough! Are you guys so willing to let my grandson die?” The old man said softly. Although his tone was very calm, his powerful aura shut many people up.

Qing Shui naturally knew that he could do the job. As he walked over, he said softly, “If one has aspirations, age is not an issue; if one has no aspirations, living for a hundred or hundreds of years sometimes would just represent that the person could eat a few more years worth of food.”

Toward people who liked to throw their weight around because of their age, people who were very afraid of people infringing on their benefits and thus would exert pressure on others because of it, Qing Shui had no nice words to say.

“Alright, alright, you’re very arrogant. I’m going to see what means you have.” The few old men were infuriated by Qing Shui’s words. They were after all, the top notch alchemists and physicians in Tang Manor. In Tang Manor, they had received great respect and treatment, enjoying great statuses.

“If you can really cure him, I’ll respect you as my teacher,” the old man from earlier once again repeated this in order to prove himself. It was as if this was the greatest price he could pay. He, Huang Yang, was also a reputable physician and he felt that lowering his status was the greatest sacrifice he could make.

Qing Shui shook his head and smiled, not saying a word. He walked up close to the bed and said softly, “Take off his clothes.”

Now, Qing Shui's words weighed the most and thus there were people who immediately helped the man on the bed to undress. There were black and purplish marks on the man's chest.

There were also some external injuries at his shoulder and it was the source of the blood traces. However, those were merely external wounds and what was fatal were his internal wounds.

Saintly Hands!

The increase to his cultivation level and spirit energy also caused Qing Shui's Saintly Hands to be much more powerful than before.

Glittering and translucent like jade, his hands which were almost transparent patted gently onto the man's body.

Bit by bit, the spirit energy flowed into Tang Chong's body. Qing Shui's palms grew increasingly faster and the dense slapping sounds kept sounding out. However, there seemed to be no changes to Tang Chong's body at all.

When the few old men who were alchemists and physicians saw Qing Shui's hands, they were slightly astonished. However, seeing that there were no changes after so long, their astonishment once again turned into that of disdain.

Fifth Master Tang looked at Qing Shui in astonishment. He could sense the flow of the spirit energy from Qing Shui's hand. At this

moment, it could be said that this pair of hands were valuable treasures.

Furthermore, he had the feeling that this young man would definitely be able to cure his grandson. Who on earth was he? To think that he was equipped with such a miraculous technique at such a young age.

Another thing was his cultivation level. Although Fifth Master Tang could sense his abilities, he could also sense the dangerous aura concealed deep within Qing Shui's body.

Although Tang Manor might not be the most powerful in Central Continent, it could be considered one of most powerful. However, within Tang Manor, amongst those who were close to his age, only Ye`er from his eldest brother's family would be able to be on par with him. As for the others, in a fight, they would probably not be a match for this young man.

Who is he?

What kind of person was able to nurture such an outstanding descendent?

15 minutes later, Qing Shui stopped. A shimmering Gold Needle that was thin as a cow's hair appeared in his right hand. If not for its color, one might not be able to notice it.

Acupuncture!

There was acupuncture in the world of the nine continents but majority of them would only be able to show a slight effect. Therefore, acupuncture existed only within rumors and not many people had been able to witness powerful acupuncture techniques.

When they saw that nine inch long Gold Needle in Qing Shui's hand, everyone was stunned. In acupuncture, a nine inch needle was the longest one. These people had experienced a lot of things in this world and could also tell that it was a Gold Needle.

Right now, even they were starting to feel that this young man might really be quite capable.

Shanzhong Acupoint!

With a flash of his hand, half of the nine inch long Gold Needle was pierced in. That high proficiency caused everyone present to be astonished and even all the physicians and alchemists felt that this needle was extremely profound.

The energy from the Ancient Book of "Rebirth"!

Right now, the mysterious energy in Qing Shui's body from the Ancient Book of "Rebirth" started to circulate slowly and channeled into Tang Chong's body through the Gold Needle.

Five Element Acupuncture!

Using the inter promoting relation of the five elements between the organs to stimulate the patient's inner potential, Qing Shui then tried to recover the injured areas of the patient's organs through Saintly Hands and the energy from the Ancient Book of "Rebirth".

The process was gradual but effective. However, it was impossible to cure him with just one treatment. Qing Shui would only treat him for this one. As for the subsequent treatment, they could rely on medicinal pills and time.

He didn't wish to overly reveal his medicinal skills as it would be too astonishing. It was astonishing enough as it was and he wasn't sure if it was worth it for him to stay for a few more days since he didn't know if Tang Manor had a Sky Penetrating Grass which was at least 5,000 Years or more.

Four hours passed and no one spoke a word during this time, nor did anyone leave. It was because they saw that Tang Chong's life had really been brought back by Qing Shui and his Gold Needle.

When Qing Shui removed the last Gold Needle, everyone seemed to exhale with relief.

"Old Master, I'm thankful to have not failed your expectations," Qing Shui smiled and said.

"Miraculous physician. This is really an eye-opener. It's really as you said, if one has aspirations, age is of no concern," Fifth Master Tang smiled and said, his eyes bright.

“To think that he could really cure him,” an old man who had been carrying a medicine box and standing there for four hours mumbled to himself, as if in a daze.

“I wouldn’t dare to call myself a miraculous doctor. Your grandson was really fortunate as well. If his injuries were slightly heavier, there would be nothing I can do either,” Qing Shui said politely.

“Miraculous physician, I’ve said that if you’re able to cure Young Master Tang, I’ll respect you as my teacher. I’ll definitely work hard to learn the acupuncture you teach me and save the lives of the people in the world,” the old man from earlier smiled and bowed, saying seriously.

He had seen people who were thick-skinned but not one to this extent. Looking at this old man, Qing Shui said, “Sir, you’re too old and there’s not much future for you in the path of medicine. Even if you were to attain a breakthrough, it would be a waste.”

Qing Shui smiled and said to the old man. He could not understand people like them but there were plenty of such people around everywhere.

“I’ve said it earlier that if you were to cure Young Master Tang, I’ll respect you as my teacher. Don’t worry, I’ll definitely not bring shame to you...”

“Did I say that I’d take you in as a disciple?” Qing Shui really

found this kind of person revolting.

“But I’ve said that...”

“Huang Yang, that’s enough. You can take your leave!” Fifth Master Tang frowned and said softly.

It was only then that the few old men took their leave but it seemed as if they still had a lot of things they wanted to say. However, they also knew that Qing Shui was not interested in talking to them and thus could only leave, sighing.

“He’ll wake up in an hour. I won’t need to meddle with the follow-ups,” Qing Shui smiled and said.

“Miraculous physician, thank you for saving my son,” the beautiful married lady from earlier walked up to Qing Shui and said agitatedly.

“Madam, it’s fate for our meeting. Your son is also one with great luck.” Qing Shui remained polite.

“Lad, come, we’ll go take a walk in the backyard. It’s too messy here.” Fifth Master Tang smiled and said.

“Alright!”

Qing Shui and Fifth Master Tang walked out of the place and

headed for the backyard. Only then did Qing Shui take a look at the surroundings, looking at this huge and luxurious manor.

“Lad, how can I address you? I’m Tang Wude from Tang Manor. As I’m ranked number five, all of them call me Fifth Master,” the old man smiled and said, looking at Qing Shui as he walked.

“My name is Qing Shui!” After giving it some thought, Qing Shui felt that there was no need for him to hide it.

“From Greencloud Continent.” Tang Wude didn’t try to hide his astonishment when he looked at Qing Shui.

Qing Shui nodded. He didn’t find this strange. After all, he was the most well-known person in Greencloud Continent now and it was normal for some great factions from other continents to keep an eye on him.

“A genius blessed by heavens is already not enough to describe you,” after taking a look at Qing Shui, Tang Wude said softly.

“Sir, you’ve overestimate me,” Qing Shui’s heart skipped a beat and said.

This rating was too high. While it was good to be receiving compliments, dangers would always lurk behind compliments. The greater the compliments, the greater the danger.

There should be many people who wish to get rid of him as soon

as possible!

“You’re very cautious. Haha, actually, I also want to tell you not to easily trust other people, especially in Central Continent. The mix of people here has some that are very messed up,” Tang Wude said before he moved onward.

“Thank you!”

Qing Shui had initially felt that he was strong and had the ability to protect himself. However, recalling the lady in the crystal coffin, he knew that he was too careless.

“Haha, you’ve saved Chong`er. To be honest, I’m really full of admiration for your medicinal skills. It’s not just me, I’m sure it’s the same for everyone else. Tang Manor is still considered to be quite powerful but I won’t ask you to serve Tang Manor since you’re not someone who would do so. It’s fate that we have met. How about we be friends?” Tang Wude stopped walking, looked at Qing Shui seriously and said smiling.

“I can’t ask for anything better!” Qing Shui smiled and replied.

“Alright, in the future, we’ll address each others as brothers. It’ll be a friendship between an old man and a young one,” Tang Wude smiled and said.

“I’ll address you as Old Master and you can call me Qing Shui or lad,” After giving it some thought, Qing Shui said.

“No, I’ll call you Qing Shui, you can call me brother. Let’s not be too aloof with each other. You’ll understand why in the future,” the old man insisted.

Qing Shui nodded and said smiling, “Qing Shui greets brother!”

“Alright, alright!”

Tang Wude was good at judging people. This young man was like a dragon that was deep underwater and would soar up into the sky very soon, sending his name across the nine continents. This act would make their relationship more lasting and reliable, although it was just an address.

Once they’d gotten closer, it was easier to talk. Tang Wude smiled and said, continuing walking, “You must stay for a few more days so that I can be a good host. I still need to thank you for saving Chong`er as well.”

“Our relationship is built on the bonding of our hearts, the other stuff is not as important. I’ll probably not be able to stay for long and will leave tomorrow or at most the day after,” Qing Shui smiled and said.

“Are you in a hurry to look for the Sky Penetrating Grass?” Tang Wude frowned and said.

AST 845 – Locating The Sky Penetrating Grass, Golden Bloodline, The Powerful Thunderous Beast

“Are you looking for the Sky Penetrating Grass urgently?”

Qing Shui nodded as he smiled at Tang Wude, “That’s right. I was hoping that you would give me some directions.”

“From what I know, it is basically impossible to get your hands on one, here in Central Continent City.” Yang Wude replied Qing Shui, after thinking for a moment.

“Do you mean that it can’t be found here?” Qing Shui was rather disappointed even though he did expect that. He looked at Tang Wude, waiting for him to explain.

“No. It definitely exists and we have it here in Central Continent. You can even find those that are more than ten thousand years. But, no one is willing to sell any, no matter what price you’d offer.”

“Because it is too valuable?” Qing Shui got the gist of the matter.

“It is more than valuable. Sky Penetrating Grass lives up to its name. Many cultivators long to obtain such a saint-level herb. If one consumes a Sky Penetrating Grass that is more than 5000 years old, it will change the constitution of the person and they will get a gifted physique. If a cultivator consumes it, his level of cultivation

will also increase immensely as his constitution changes. At the minimum, he will definitely be more powerful than the average cultivator. However, how effective it will be is based on the user's original strength and potential. Besides that, it has great regenerative properties which can boost one's lifespan by 200 years." Tang Wude explained leisurely.

Qing Shui now understood why he could not find any Sky Penetrating Grass anywhere. Even if someone possessed one, they would never let anyone else know. In his mind, he had summarized it succinctly. It was a special herb with miraculous properties.

In the world of the Nine Continents, everything was expensive. Techniques, rare medicinal pills and herbs, divine weapons...

The only things that could tempt powerful cultivators were things which share the rarity category of divine weapons, Sky Penetrating Grass that is more than 5000 years, Yang Revitalising Grass, Spirit Summoning Grass, Golden Buddha Aura Lotus...

This was also the reason why Qing Shui bought all the Requiem Grass he could. Mixed with a type of demon beast blood, it could create a medicinal pill that could rival the effects of a Spirit Summoning Grass. He had discovered this in the Poison Scriptures. So regardless of the cost, he would buy any Requiem Grass he saw as it was actually considerable rare.

"How can I boost my chances of obtaining it?" Qing Shui asked. He definitely must obtain this Sky Penetrating Grass unless it does not exist in the World of the Nine Continents.

“It is impossible to get something like that from another person. Only extraordinary people can obtain such an item and these people don’t lack money. They might not be willing to even exchange it for a divine weapon,” Tang Wude said softly.

Despite the allure of divine weapons, everyone unconsciously hopes that they themselves can become stronger. This required a lot more time, so it was important to increase one’s cultivation level and lifespan. As the Sky Penetrating Grass has the properties to do both, it was obvious why no one would even reveal that they have it. There are many people out there who would kill to obtain such an item.

Actually, the thing that bothered Qing Shui most was whether it was worth using the Sky Penetrating Grass to create Ren Meridian Strengthening Pellet and Du Meridian Strengthening Pellet since its effects were almost at the level of Yang Revitalising Grass or Golden Buddha Aura Lotus.

He suddenly found it laughable. The alchemy recipes he obtained from his practice of Alchemy would never be wrong. The effects of the Ren Meridian Strengthening Pellet and Du Meridian Strengthening Pellet would also definitely be impressive.

But the description of their effects were not convincing? It might not even match the effects of consuming the Sky Penetrating Grass itself. However, the description of each medicine might be incomplete. It doesn’t actually state the miraculous effects of consuming both Ren Meridian Strengthening Pellet and Du Meridian Strengthening Pellet at the same time.

But the greatest problem right now was getting the herb!

“Where would this herb appear?” Qing Shui guessed from Tang Wude’s reply that he should have an idea of the location of the herb.

“Sky Penetrating Grass usually grows in places with little human activity but I know a place where it is frequently seen.” Tang Wude mulled over it and frowned.

“Where? Brother, please tell me.”

“Qing Shui, I have no problem telling you the location but that place is too dangerous. You...” Tang Wude looked at Qing Shui, and was hesitant.

“Don’t worry. I won’t be rash.” Qing Shui smiled, feeling overjoyed.

“Alright, I’ll tell you but you must promise me that you won’t rush in rashly. With your capabilities, you would definitely have chance some time later. “ Tang Wude knew that Qing Shui would definitely go searching so he could only advise him thus.

“Brother, I promise. I don’t want to die so early,” Qing Shui smiled and said.

“You can find it at the Sky Penetrating Mountains of the Eastern Victory Divine Continent,” Tang Wude said calmly looking at Qing Shui.

“Sky Penetrating Grass comes from Sky Penetrating Mountains? That does make sense. Do you know where these mountains are?” Eastern Victory Divine Continent was huge, even though it was possible to find a location with its name, it would still take time.

“Just like how Giant Beasts Mountains lies to the east of Greencloud Continent. Similarly, Sky Penetrating Mountains is at the eastern edge of Eastern Victory Divine Continent. The mountains also contain the highest concentration of Spiritual Qi in that continent so it is incomparably dangerous. No one knows how vast the mountains are. Likewise, no one can estimate the number of possible treasures and opportunities within it. Qing Shui, you must think about it carefully. Don’t be rash,” Tang Wude reminded him once again.

“Thank you, brother. Don’t worry!” Qing Shui could feel Tang Wude’s sincerity.

“I don’t know what to give you but here!” Tang Wude took out a jade pendant and handed it to Qing Shui.

Qing Shui immediately spotted the Black Treasured Stone on the jade pendant. Based on the aura that the Black Treasured Stone emitted, he immediately knew that it was more powerful than the one that he wore.

The one he wore was actually given to him by the Old Ancestor. It was a level 5 Black Treasured Stone but it was of inferior quality since it only had a 50% speed boost.

“I know that you will definitely go to the Eastern Victory Divine Continent. I won’t stop you. This is a Level 6 Black Treasure Stone of superior quality. It can boost your speed by 100%. It’s slightly better than the one you have right now.” Tang Wude smiled and stuffed the jade pendant into Qing Shui’s hand.

Qing Shui smiled gratefully and thanked him, without rejecting the gift.

“Brother, Is Dragon Emperor Mountain very powerful?” Qing Shui asked casually with a smile.

“Not only are they very powerful, they are extremely powerful. You will be interested to know the other identities of the people there,” Tang Wude laughed.

“Huh? How special must they be for you to revere them?” Qing Shui was curious.

Some of the people from Dragon Emperor Mountain have Golden Bloodlines.”

“Golden Bloodline!”

Qing Shui had heard of Golden Bloodline and Violet Bloodlines

but he never actually knew who had them. He was surprised to actually find out today the very people who possessed the Golden bloodline. The bloodlines held an almost mythical existence to him since the people with it seemed so powerful.

“Don’t overreact over such thing. Whether it is the Golden Bloodline or Violet Bloodline, there is a limited number of these people. In their families, only a few of them actually inherit such bloodlines.”

Each of these people are blessed with incredible talents and intelligence. They are valued highly as they are the future pillars of their clans.

.....

As they chatted, it was time for dinner. The banquet in the Tang residence had already been prepared. Qing Shui was only close the Tang Wufu’s branch but he did not know how powerful that branch was in the Tang Clan.

But Tang Wude was the person he thought highly of. Tang Wude held the same attitude as him. They both had a lot of potential though Qing Shui was definitely more talented. They were, of course, taking a chance on such matters.

During the banquet, Qing Shui was well-received by Tang Wude’s branch since he had saved Tang Chong, more importantly he was an incredibly young master physician.

When night fell, Qing Shui entered his Realm of the Violet Jade Immortal from the room that was prepared for him.

His boring training begun!

He would head where the plum blossoms bloomed so he could calm his mind and practice his Taichi Fist. The effects were great and the plum blossoms were never damaged.

Qing Shui discovered that he still had one Mysterious Fruit Tree, two Ice Snow Sacred Fruit and some Vermillion Fruit. These fruits require a long time so it was difficult for Qing Shui to accumulate much even within his Realm of the Violet Immortal.

This time, Qing Shui called for his Thunderous Beast. His Thunderous Beast made a low growl, which sounded like rolling thunder, when it saw the Ice Snow Sacred Fruit. He decided to feed it one of the fruit.

An Ice Snow Sacred Fruit could increase a demonic beast's power by 200 countries or advance a cultivation technique to another realm – if lucky. Moreover, the advancement wasn't by one level but by an entire realm, which could skip several levels in one go. Realms were divided by sizes but even the smallest realm could advance a Grade Two Martial Saint to a Grade Three Martial Saint in an instant. Likewise, it was possible to advance up to Grade Five, Six or even Seven. This was why the Ice Snow Sacred Fruit was so incredible. However, only Grade Two Martial Saint up to Peak Martial Saint demonic beasts would be affected. The effects weren't limited until the Grand Perfection Stage of Peak Martial Saint.

Very quickly, beautiful purple glowing light flashed across his Thunderous Beast with a crackling sound. Qing Shui could sense the changes within his Thunderous Beast using his spiritual sense. Since he was going to Eastern Victory Divine Continent soon, raising his Thunderous Beast's prowess was his best option. As long as his Thunderous Beast could withstand its enemies' attacks, its Thunderbolt was a terrifyingly powerful skill and its Violet Lightning Strike was even more so.

Who could withstand the effects of Thunderbolt which could continuously lower one's speed, perception and reaction time? The Violet Lightning Strike was simply lethal.

Grade Nine Martial Saint!

This time round, his Thunderous Beast had immediately gone from Grade Six to Grade Nine Martial Saint. Qing Shui was fairly satisfied with the results. These two were the rewards from his Seventh Level Realm of the Violet Jade Immortal.

He looked at the remaining Ice Snow Sacred Fruit. He thought about it for a moment and decided to give it to his Thunderous Beast as he could collect another two ripe fruits in a few days.

This time round, the effects were significantly poorer. His Thunderous Beast increased by one Grade to Grade Ten Martial Saint. But Qing Shui was already satisfied. Both succeeded, besides Grade Ten was pretty good already, since he had allowed it to consume two fruits consecutively. Qing Shui was slightly aware

that he might have been too anxious. A demonic beast's strength was different from that of a human, even at Grade Ten Martial Saint, his Thunderous Beast's strength had already slightly exceed the strength of one star.

In the end, his Thunderous Beast's overall stats were better than his Diamond Gigantic Elephant and Firebird. Sadly, its attack was more of a support type. It did not possess an ultimate killer move like his Diamond Gigantic Elephant and his Firebird.

The strength of one star plus the gift from Thunder God— Violet Thunder Protection!

Violet Thunder Protection: The Thunderous Beast's unique ability that activates automatically to double its strength with zero energy consumption. When the Thunderous Beast is under physical attack, it has a chance to paralyze the enemy.

With its Thunderbolt, Violet Lightning Strike and heaven-defying Lightning Recovery, his Thunderous Beast was considerable strong. Qing Shui's aim now was for his Thunderous Beast to sync with him so that he could use his killer moves any time and eliminate his opponents in a split second.

AST 846 – The Leveled Up Image Of Yin-Yang, Expert Level Focused-Concentration

Looking at the Thunderous Beast now, Qing Shui was still quite satisfied. Although its actual attacking powers were not comparable to those of the Diamond Gigantic Elephant or the Fire Bird, when it teamed up with him, they were unrivalled. Therefore, he let the Thunderous Beast take the two Ice Snow Sacred Fruits as Qing Shui felt that this time around, he would definitely be able to use the Thunderous Beast but the Diamond Gigantic Elephant and Fire Bird might not be of much use this time around.

Most important, with the Thunderous Beast's constitution, the enemies would not dare to hit it with ordinary physical attacks since they might be paralyzed. The Thunderous Beast's speed was also quite monstrous and although the side effects of the Thunderbolt and the Violet Lightning Strike brought to the enemies were strong, their attack prowess was also very strong.

The other two Ice Snow Sacred Fruits were also going to ripen soon. Qing Shui didn't know if he should give them to the Thunderous Beast against. After all, he would definitely be heading to the Sky Penetrating Mountains.

Looking at the last remaining Mysterious Fruit, after over two months had passed, it was ready for use. He had initially wanted to refine it into Fate Pills and to give them to the people around him. However, thinking of how the time ratio in the Realm of the Violet Jade Immortal had increased by a lot and there were now two Mysterious Fruit Trees, there were plenty of chances to do so in

the future. Now, it was more crucial to keep it for his own use.

After making the decision, Qing Shui didn't hesitate and swallowed the last Mysterious Fruit. Although this was the third time he was taking it, he was still filled with anticipation and full of expectation toward the results.

The possible effects the Mysterious Fruit could bring were too many. It could randomly allow the breakthrough of one martial technique, random increase in an attribute such as strength, speed and defence to be two times as strong or even having the chances of comprehending the essence of a martial technique or allowing him to gain an alchemy recipe...

Of course, the success rate was still extraordinarily low but Qing Shui had succeeded on his two attempts. Therefore, he felt that there must be other reasons why he had the Mysterious Fruits. Despite this, the chance for him to gain things which were of little value was still very high.

He quietly digest the powers of the Mysterious Fruit and everything progressed steadily. Qing Shui's brows relaxed and he was so calm that it was hard for others to tell that he was absorbing heavenly and earthly treasures.

Boom!

Qing Shui suddenly felt a tremble in his head as he appeared in his consciousness. This scenario just like what had happened when he had battled against the Marrow Nibbling Worms previously.

Just as he was struck by confusion, he suddenly realized that the image of Yin-Yang was circulating much faster than before.

The image of Yin-Yang didn't seem to have any change in its size compared to before but it appeared to be even stronger, with a rustic feel to it. It exuded the most basic mysterious powers in the world. At this moment, Qing Shui's mind was very clear.

The colors of the image of Yin-Yang became even more rustic and mysterious looking and the image of the Yin-Yang fish was increasingly clear, being the most basic grey color, just like the color of the primordial flames.

Could it be that his image of Yin-Yang had leveled up?

From the very start when the image of Yin-Yang seemed to be very weak, it had continued to level up and had now become a powerful existence, constantly exuding mysterious powers to temper his organs and replenish his physical strength and spirit energy.

The image of Yin-Yang was much stronger than before, allowing Qing Shui to be able to better resist pressures and attacks through spirit energy. Although the leveling up of the image of Yin-Yang didn't allow his abilities to be increased directly, the benefits were even better than having his actual cultivation level increased.

The other thing was, he felt that he could better focus his spirit energy compared to before. Under extreme focus, the powers he could display were more powerful and he felt that everything

seemed to be slower.

Expert level Focused Concentration!

Tremendous increase in speed and strength!

The Focused Concentration he had comprehended when he was at the Southern Sea had actually leveled up here. With his Focused Concentration, both his attack prowess and his defence could increase by about 20%.

Now, Qing Shui looked at the expert level Focused Concentration!

With the expert level Focused Concentration, not only would his attack prowess and defence be increased by 20%, it could also increase the resistance against spirit energy, allowing the powers of his spirit energy to be better unleashed.

Qing Shui smiled happily and retreated from his consciousness very quickly. This was considered good and he was very satisfied. After all, the chances of him being able to attain a breakthrough to the seventh heavenly layer through the Mysterious Fruit was close to zero. Although everything was possible with the Mysterious Fruit, the chances were too low and even if there was a possibility, it was merely a possibility.

After all this, it was about time for him to leave the Realm of the Violet Jade Immortal. Ever since coming out from the crystal

palace, his luck seemed to be quick good.

After cleaning up and changing into a fresh set of clothes, he left the Realm of the Violet Jade Immortal.

He had nothing planned in the morning and planned to have a walk around the city. Tang Wude accompanied Qing Shui and the two of them chatted as they walked.

“Brother, how powerful do you think a Martial Emperor is?” Qing Shui asked casually.

Qing Shui’s Ancient Strengthening Technique had been at the Peak of the sixth heavenly layer for quite a long time but he had not been able to attain a breakthrough. Based on estimation, the Ancient Strengthening Technique at the seventh heavenly layer would increase his abilities by at least ten times. Would he be able to attain the Martial Emperor level then?

“Martial Emperor, haha, that’s a far off existence. Qing Shui, you’re already very strong now and your talent is the best that I’ve seen so far. When the opportunity comes, maybe you’ll be able to breakthrough to the Martial Emperor level,” Tang Wude smiled and said.

“Brother, do you know if there are any Martial Emperors in Central Continent?” Qing Shui already had the answer but he still asked. It was because he felt that that lady in the crystal coffin should be at least an elementary Martial Emperor .

“Yes, there are still Martial Emperors but they seldom show up.” A hint of enthusiasm flashed in Tang Wude’s eyes.

“How powerful is a Martial Emperor?” Qing Shui sighed and said.

“Peak Martial Saints would be weak in front of them as ants in front of a Martial Saint. A Martial Emperor would not even need to move a finger to kill a Peak Martial Saint,” Tang Wude shook his head and said.

Qing Shui only smiled bitterly. Wasn’t he like that before that lady? It would be extremely easy for her to kill him. However, seeing that he was still alive despite having been attacked twice, it could only mean that she did not go all out to try to kill him. Otherwise, it would merely take a thought for her to kill him. He did not understand why she did not. Before her, he was so inferior that he could not find an answer he felt was right.

Emperor City Auction Hall

What a domineering name! This was what Qing Shui felt. The Central Continent could be considered the Emperor City but Qing Shui could not help but think of Dragon Emperor Mountain. He felt that the Emperor City Auction Hall was a property of Dragon Emperor Mountain, just because of the word ‘Emperor’.

“In this area, Tang Manor is considered to have the best medicinal hall, while for auction halls, it’ll be this Emperor City Auction Hall. This belongs to Dragon Emperor Mountain,” Tang

Wude smiled and said.

Qing Shui smiled and nodded. As expected, it belonged to the Dragon Emperor Mountain. The two of them headed for the entrance.

“Fifth Master, you’re here! Please come in!” When the guard saw Tang Wude, he smiled and quickly came up to welcome him, leaving the other guests aside.

“No need to attend to me. I’ll head up myself,” Tang Wude smiled and said.

“Alright, alright. Fifth Master, please feel free!”

Tang Wude and Qing Shui went up to the second storey from the side door. The auction hall was very big but there were only two storeys. The first storey was the hall while the second storey had private rooms separated off by partition boards. Although the rooms were small, the decor was luxurious but yet did not block the view.

Qing Shui came here to try his luck, to see if he could come across anything which would be useful to him. Usually, there would be two rounds of auctions in a day, with one in the morning and one in the afternoon. Each round would take two hours.

Qing Shui and Tang Wude only left Tang Manor in the late morning. Although the auction had not yet started, it would be

starting soon.

In the private room, they could see most of the places on the first storey. This auction hall would not lose out to Cloud Adventurer Guild's hall and there were definitely more than several tens of thousands of people seated there.

The auctioneers for large-scale auctions would all be martial arts practitioners who were at least Xiantian. Otherwise, it would be hard for them to be heard by everyone present.

The people on top could clearly see those below but the reverse was not true. Moreover, those on the second floor were people with status and reputation. There was food and drink provided in the private rooms and if required, there would even be two beautiful maids who would help to provide massages.

However, Qing Shui and Tang Wude did not request for the maids to stay.

“Brother, how are the things in this auction hall?” Qing Shui smiled, sat down and asked.

“How should I say it? This is the biggest auction hall in the area. It has everything, from medicinal pills, medicinal herbs, weapons, demonic beast's core, bones and hide, as well as defensive equipment.”

“But for miraculous medicines and divine artifacts, you can

basically forget about it. Only idiots would sell them. More people come to try to dig for treasures.”

“Dig for treasures? What do you mean?” Qing Shui asked directly.

“There might be new and interesting things being put up for sale. There could be the case where you recognize the value of something even though others don’t or it could also be no one recognizes the value but you find out that it’s a treasure after purchasing it. It’s just that the chances of the latter occurring is very low,” Tang Wude smiled and said.

Qing Shui knew about these. He was only here to try his luck today. After all, he’d just attend one auction and leave in the afternoon.

Very soon, it was time for the auction to start.

There were three auctioneers wearing black colored professional clothes. One of them was an old man while the other two were middle-aged men. The moment they came out, they greeted everyone present. It was clear from their professional smiles and presentable actions that they were very experienced auctioneers. The old man’s tone was very pleasant and amiable.

“Let’s cut a long story short, I’m sure many of you present knows me. I have also introduced myself earlier. Now let me announce that the auction for today has officially started. We’ll start off with the first item.” Hearing the old man announcing the start of the

auction, the noisy auction hall immediately fell silent.

“Ten 500 Year Snow Lotus Seeds. The starting bid is 1,000 silver taels and each increasing bid must not be lower than 20 silver taels. The auction starts now.” The old man said softly but his voice could be clearly heard by everyone.

Qing Shui was not interested in this but this did not mean that other people were not interested. No matter how big the auction hall, it was impossible for everything on auction to be miraculous medicine or divine weapons. It would be considered good if there were a few good pieces at the end of each auction.

In this world, no matter how good the stuff you bring out, as long as you can name a price, someone would be able to afford it.

Competition was not very tough and someone got it very quickly at 1,300 silver taels. The Snow Lotus Seeds relieve heatiness and toxins. To ordinary rich merchants, they were considered quite good.

After all, there were many medicinal pills which ordinary people could not take.

AST 847 – Passive Treasure, Spirit Gathering Lamp

A few more items were quickly auctioned out. There was not much competition and thus they were sold off very quickly.

“Ladies and gentlemen, the next item on the list is a mysterious item. Even our client is not aware what the item is but he nonetheless entrusted it to our Emperor City Auction Hall to put it up for auction. Our professional appraisers have appraised it to be an ancient item. We’ll reveal a little bit more information. The client comes from a major clan and we trust that he would probably not bring rubbish here to put up for auction. Alright, we’ll start accepting bids. The lowest bid will be one gold tael, nothing lower.” The auctioneer took off the cloth on the table and said.

When Qing Shui saw that item on the table, he was stunned. It was a dark green ancient lamp-shaped object that appeared very old and tattered. However, at this moment, Qing Shui wanted to call out its name.

Spirit Gathering Lamp !

Qing Shui could clearly remember the effect of the Spirit Gathering Lamp. If one were to equip it in battle, it could randomly increase the spiritual energy of all the holder’s summoned demonic beasts until the battle ended.

Qing Shui could even sense the rippling spiritual energy on it.

Although it was not very strong, he could sense it clearly. Yet, he was confused why no one had been able to use it.

He did not know its actual effect either.

He suddenly thought of Magic Treasures. Such treasures were categorized into active and passive types. The active types were those like Qing Shui's Demon Binding Ropes and Soulshake Bell. To be useful, Qing Shui had to hold them in his hands and directly use it against the target.

The other type of magic treasure was the passive type, like this Spirit Gathering Lamp. Passive treasures were only effective when placed in a specific location. For example, small-scale items like gemstones could be hung at the waist, around the neck, or embedded into weapons or clothes. There was no need to specially control them and their effect would take place automatically, like passive battle techniques.

Looking at the one meter long Spirit Gathering Lamp on the auction table, Qing Shui knew this was a good item for beast tamers. However, ordinary people would never carry such an item in battle, as they did not know its value or purpose.

Since they were not aware of its use, the lamp would be useless. Moreover, Qing Shui could sense that this Spirit Gathering Lamp's grade was definitely not high. Therefore, even if someone were to really hold and use it, he would not sense any obvious effects.

Qing Shui could sense that there were too many restrictions to

this item. Firstly, one would need to temper this Spirit Gathering Lamp to a higher grade. Next, one must have demonic beasts at the level of his Fire Bird and Thunderous Beast for the lamp to be useful.

Another thing Qing Shui was concerned about whether the item had the same effect as the Spirit Gathering Lamp he recalled. Who would come in possession of such a Magic Treasure?

If it really was a Magic Treasure, it should also have some effect when held. However, who would hold such an unwieldy item during battle? Many cultivators would carry weapons in both hands or a weapon in one and a shield in another...

Since the Spirit Gathering Lamp was so big, it was impossible to carry it easily. Therefore, even if it was put up for auction today, no one knew what use it had. Therefore, the greatest value of this item was as an antique collectible.

However, Qing Shui thought of his Fire Bird, Thunderous Beast and other beasts. He didn't know if the Diamond Gigantic Elephant's skills like the Diamond Sword Qi and the Mighty Elephant Stomp would be affected by the Spirit Gathering Lamp.

However, the attacks of the Thunderous Beast and Fire Bird would definitely be affected by the Spirit Gathering Lamp. Of course, this assumed that this "Spirit Gathering Lamp" was the Spirit Gathering Lamp he knew of. Therefore, Qing Shui was hell-bent on getting his hands on this Spirit Gathering Lamp.

“Two gold taels!”

“Three gold taels!”

...

As Qing Shui was in deep thought, people had started calling out their bids. Most were from rich merchants who merely wanted to have it as a collectible.

“Five thousand gold taels!” Suddenly, a cold voice not far from Qing Shui rang out.

The bids were increasing by one or two or at most by ten taels on the first storey, but the total had not even increased to four hundred gold taels. The person on the second storey may not have been able to hold it in anymore and just shouted out a massive bid to shut everyone up.

There was an unspoken rule in the place. If someone from the second storey called out a bid, those on the first storey would not continue. It was the same this time. No one from the second storey called out any bids either.

“Number 378 from upstairs has called a bid of 5,000 gold taels. Are there any higher bids?” The auctioneer waited for a while before calling out.

“Brother, do you know who that number 378 is?” Qing Shui

asked Tang Wude.

“Those who come to the second storey are those who do not wish to have their identities revealed, so no one knows. Of course, you will be able to find out if you pay attention when they leave, unless they try to conceal themselves. Why, Qing Shui, you’re also interested on getting your hands on that weird item?” Tang Wude smiled and said.

“That’s right. I hope to win that item.” Qing Shui cut to the chase and said directly.

“Alright, I’ll help you!” Tang Wude smiled and said.

“Brother, I’ll do it myself. I’m afraid that I’ll only bring you trouble.” Qing Shui smiled and said.

“Haha, Qing Shui, you’ve underestimated your brother and the Tang Manor. Although the Tang Manor isn’t overly powerful, most people would show some respect to the Tang Manor in this Continent’s Capital. You can bid for it, but the money must be paid by me.” Tang Wude smiled and said.

“With brother’s words, I’m relieved. I won’t stand on ceremony then.”

It was then that the auctioneer spoke up once again, “Calling 5,000 gold taels thrice! If there’s no higher bidder, then the bid will be closed!”

“10,000 taels!”

Qing Shui’s voice rang out. Although it was not loud, it was heard clearly.

“10,000 taels, 10,000 taels! Room 215 has bid 10,000 taels!” The auctioneer’s voice was very encouraging.

The auctioneer continued to repeat a few times, as if fearing that other people were not aware of the current bid. He then asked if there was anyone who was going to call a higher bid. He even repeated that the person who had put up the item for auction was from a great clan.

“20,000 taels!”

A cold snort rang out.

Hearing the voice, Qing Shui thought that it would be someone who was more senior, likely an old man. However, the person who called out the bid sounded younger.

“Acting blindly without a care for death!” Hearing that cold snort, Tang Wude casually replied. Although his voice was very soft, the other party would definitely be able to hear it.

“50,000 taels!” Qing Shui had plenty of money in the Realm of

the Violet Jade Immortal. Even if he needed to spend even more money, he was confident in beating the other party. However, he had not expected that after Tang Wude had spoke, the other party had fallen silent.

The other party probably recognized Tang Wude's identity. Although it was slightly overbearing to pressure others with his status, the other party had tried to do the same earlier. Some auctioneers would even make use of the competitions between such aristocrat clans to earn a pile of money.

50,000 taels calling once!

50,000 taels calling twice!

50,000 taels calling thrice!

Sold!

Qing Shui eventually spent 50,000 gold taels to get his hands on this item, but the one who paid was Tang Wude. To many people, this was a prodigal act. To the auctioneer, it was an achievement he was proud of, to be able to auction out an item at 50,000 gold taels from a starting bid of one gold tael. This was the most unexpected event in his auctioning life, but as an auctioneer, this was a glorious achievement.

Qing Shui was not interested in the remaining items. A relatively powerful weapon, the Rainbow Sword, was sold off at a whopping

price. To the people here, money was nothing. It was the item that had the least worth.

There were also some medicinal pills and other miscellaneous items that needed to be exchanged for items of similar value or there were specific requirements for the item to be traded for. For example, this could mean using ten medicinal pills to exchange for eight medicinal pills of the same grade. For such an auction, the auctioneer hall would request a certain amount of administrative fees.

Until the auction was over, Qing Shui didn't speak another word and went to collect the Spirit Gathering Lamp with Tang Wude. The items bidden on during the auction would be sent to the private rooms after the auction was over.

Qing Shui picked up the Spirit Gathering Lamp. It was quite heavy, but it gave the feeling of being a lamp and bell at the same time.

“Qing Shui, do you recognize this item?” Tang Wude watched as Qing Shui fiddled with this item. To him, this was something that was useless and worth one gold tael.

“I don't. But for some reason, I quite like it and wanted to have it.” Qing Shui smiled and said. There was no need to say the truth in some cases. Sometimes, saying white lies were for the better good.

He kept it in the Realm of the Violet Jade Immortal!

The moment he tossed it in, Qing Shui sensed a strange feeling, as if his connection with the few demonic beasts in the Realm of the Violet Jade Immortal had gotten stronger. His heart could not help but skip a beat as he thought of one possibility.

When the Spirit Gathering Lamp had been placed in the Realm of the Violet Jade Immortal, it had been the equivalent of putting in a Magic Treasure.

Heading out with Tang Wude, Qing Shui planned to study this Spirit Gathering Lamp closely later. Compared to active Magic Treasures, Qing Shui felt that passive Magic Treasures were also exceptionally powerful. They were like passive battle techniques and Qing Shui liked them just as much.

...

“Brother, I’m heading off!” Qing Shui didn’t stay for lunch.

“I won’t stop you then. Be careful on your way. You’ll be able to arrive at the Eastern Victory Divine Continent if you continue to head east. Remember what I told you, don’t be rash. The Sky Penetrating Mountains are extremely dangerous and with your current cultivation level, you’ll only be able to stay around the borders. Before you enter, you must be extremely careful.” Tang Wude reminded Qing Shui.

“I will” Qing Shui waved and went up the Fire Bird. Tang Wude’s silhouette grew increasingly smaller as he flew away.

...

“Young Master, that young man has flown to the east alone.” A young man from the Wan Clan ran into the courtyard, reporting to a man who was drinking wine together with a coquettish lady.

“Alone?”

The man was in his thirties or slightly older. He appeared very sharp and capable. His bright eyes lit up, and with his slightly bent hawklike nose, he gave off a vicious feeling. However, he could still be considered handsome.

“That’s right. By the looks of it, he seems to be heading for the Eastern Victory Divine Continent.”

“Lad, since you’ve made me, Wan Liankun, lose my pride just for a broken antique, I’ll make you pay with your life. Call 4th Elder, 6th Elder, 7th Elder, 9th Elder and the others over. Keep an eye on that young man, don’t lose sight of him,” the young man said quickly.

...

Qing Shui slowly flew toward the east. At the start, he flew at a very stable speed as he checked out the scenery below. He had no plan to descend since Tang Wude had said that there wouldn’t be any Sky Penetrating Grass here. It was something that he would

not be able to get his hands on through purchasing or trading with items. Therefore, what he had to do now was rush to the Eastern Victory Divine Continent and try his luck in the Sky Penetrating Mountains.

Even though he had arrived in the Central Continent City, Qing Shui didn't head to Cold Ice City to visit Hai Dongqing. He didn't know if she was fine or whether she would really be waiting for him as she said she would.

In the end, Qing Shui shook his head and stopped thinking about it. He could think about it in the future. As he was just about to leave using the Nine Continents Steps, he sensed that, not far away, there were a few flying demonic beasts tailing him.

AST 848 – The Person Who Humiliates, Often Receives Humiliation

After sensing that there were a few flying beasts tailing behind him, Qing Shui had wanted to throw them off his track with a Nine Continents Steps. However, thinking of how he had not offended anyone in Central Continent, with the exception of causing that one person to have lost his pride earlier at the Emperor City Auction Hall. Or rather, he had borrowed Tang Wude's status to cause the other party to lose his pride.

Since the other party was afraid of Tang Manor, it meant that they were not as powerful as Tang Manor. However, they still dared to follow him. They must have investigated his identity and they must also be considered quite a strong clan in the area.

He gradually flew out of the Central Continent City, where there was a spacious wilderness. This was how the terrain in the world of the nine continents was like. There would basically be a piece of wilderness between any two cities, even if it was near a Continent's Capital.

Qing Shui slowed down upon reaching this wilderness. He knew that the people behind him would catch up very quickly. Qing Shui shook his head. There was no fairness in this world, not even in bidding for an auctioned item.

The prerequisite to having fairness was that both parties must be standing at the same level. If they were not on ground of the same height, there would be no such thing as fairness. It was like now, the person who was following them had pressured the people on

the first level of the auction hall and how Tang Wude had pressured him. And now, they were now coming to deal with this outsider.

“Since you guys are here, just come out!”

Qing Shui came to a stop and said softly. Although his voice was not loud, it could be heard several thousand meters away. Moreover, he had already sensed that those people had followed him here. The only thing was that they were not that strong.

The sound of a flying beast’s flapping wings rang out and three Black Feather Cranes appeared around Qing Shui.

There were a total of five people on the three Black Feather Cranes, four of which were old men, while the last one seemed to be a young man who should be slightly older than Qing Shui.

“Your spiritual sense is not bad. To think that you can discover us from such a distance away,” One of the old man who was wearing clothes made of sackcloth said slowly.

The old man was of a mediocre figure but his face was horrendous. There was almost no gap between his two brows, making them appear like a thick black worm. His eyes were small like the size of beans, flashing hints of cold light. His nose, which was considerably large, took up a huge part of his face. It was hard to forget such a person even after just a single glance.

The other three old men could be considered normal but these people had a hint of viciousness exuding from them. Qing Shui's spiritual sense was much more powerful now and thus he was positive that the aura they were exuding was related to the martial techniques they cultivated.

“Why are you following me?” Although Qing Shui guessed that the reason was because of what happened at the auction hall, he was not sure and thus decided to ask.

“Why did we follow you? We'll tell you when you've died. You're just an outsider but yet you don't know how to keep a low profile. You think that you're a member of Tang Manor?” That young man looked at Qing Shui furiously and said.

Qing Shui smiled. They were really the other party from the auction hall. Putting aside that they had already suggested it through their words, there was one more thing which made him sure. It was the other party's voice. This voice was from the person who was competing with him at the auction hall.

“Aren't you guys afraid that Tang Manor will deal with you? I'm a friend of Tang Manor,” Qing Shui smiled and said to the young man.

“Friend? Haha, stop blowing your own trumpet. I have no idea what means you used to save Tang Manor's Tang Chong but you're just a travelling physician. Earlier, at the Emperor City Auction Hall, Tang Manor was the one who paid, right? To think that a poor bloke like you would dare to think of being friends with Tang Manor,” The young man laughed. Even when he laughed, he was

still exuding a hint of coldness.

“That’s right. What’s wrong with that? I’m friends with Tang Manor! Friendship is not measured by wealth.” Qing Shui deliberately made it sound as if he was puzzled.

“Don’t you understand that their action just meant that all the debts between you and Tang Manor have been cleared? Friends? You think Tang Manor’s friends are so cheap?” The young man said with disdain.

Qing Shui thought about it and could not help but agree. If it was not because of his potential it would really be hard for him to become friends with Tang Manor. It was the same in every society. If you don’t have the ability, why would people want to become friends with you?

“You’re killing me just because of this?” Qing Shui smiled and looked at the young man, asking.

“Handover that antique, kneel down before me and I will forget about everything,” the young man looked at Qing Shui and said with a domineering tone.

Qing Shui looked at the young man and shook his head, “Why are there so many idiots in this world?”

As Qing Shui’s words ended, the young man who was standing on the back of one of the Black Feather Crane dropped to his knees in

Qing Shui's direction. Before Qing Shui had spoken, he had sent two silver needles flying, hitting the young man in his knees.

Do unto people what people do unto you. There was no need to be courteous toward people like this. They needed to be stomped down to their deaths.

Initially, the silver needles had not fully pierced into his knees but he already felt tremendous pain and could not help but let out a painful cry. However, when he dropped to his knees, his kneecaps came into contact with the Black Feather Crane's hardy back and they dug deeper into his knees, causing him to cry out in agony once again.

The kneecap is one of a person's most fragile and sensitive spots and there were many acupuncture points there. Now that his kneecaps were pierced by needles and especially when it was done by Qing Shui intentionally, the pain was simply unbearable. Moreover, after he had knelt down, they stabbed into his bones and bent inside his body, causing the pain to reach all the way to his marrow.

“Kill him! Kill him!”

The young man rolled on the Black Feather Crane's crying out in agony.

Three of the old men dashed out toward Qing Shui on the Black Feather Cranes. They were not weak but they were far from a match for the current Qing Shui. Qing Shui calmly took out the

Soulshake Bell.

Ring.....

That piercing sound rang out, causing one to feel as if it could penetrate through the roots of one's teeth as well as one's eardrums. Two of the three Peak Martial King Black Feather Cranes died immediately. The last remaining one went crazy. It was the one the young man was riding on.

Caught off guard, the one of the young man's leg was bitten off by the Black Feather Crane. The remaining old man, who had stayed behind, quickly saved the young man from the crane's mouth, killing it in fury.

The old man who was an elementary Martial Saint was able to easily deal with a Peak Martial King demonic beast.

Primordial Flame Ball!

Qing Shui wanted to try the prowess of his Primordial Flame Ball. Although the people before him were a bit weak, he could still give it a try. The Primordial Flame Ball quickly formed in his hands. Sensing the terrifying prowess of the Primordial Flame Ball, the few old men were stunned.

With this pause, they ended up being devoured by Qing Shui's Primordial Flame Ball.

This caused the two remaining old man and the young man who had lost one of his legs to panic. Their faces turned pale. This was too scary. The flame ball in Qing Shui's hand had burned two elementary Martial Saints, leaving not even ashes.

“Which clan are you guys from?” Qing Shui smiled, stepping into the air as he walked over.

Although Qing Shui had not thought of challenging the backing these people had for now, it would be good for him to know in case they came into contact in the future. He might be able to avoid some trouble.

The other party did not say a word, nor did they try to fight back.

Qing Shui once again garnered up a Primordial Flame Ball. Qing Shui was very satisfied with the prowess of this flame ball. It could even instantly kill people who were of the same level as him. Moreover, he also had the Twin Dragon Explosion, which could create a dark black hole with its explosion. Even those who were stronger than Qing Shui could be torn apart by the black hole and thus disappear.

The countenance of the three of them turned pale. They knew that they would definitely die today but they still held onto a hint of hope. “If I were to say it, would you let me go?” The young man bit his lips and said trembling. “You can't say it. We will die even if we do and we'll end up bringing down the entire clan,” one of the old men said firmly.

Pfft!

The old man who had spoke disappeared immediately, leaving behind an old man holding onto the young man. Otherwise, the young man would have fallen down to the ground.

Pfft!

The young man's head was smashed by the last remaining old man and Qing Shui also sent out another Primordial Flame Ball without any hesitation.

Nine Continents Steps!

He disappeared from this barren land!

Not long after Qing Clan left, the people from Wan Clan rushed over. When they saw the three dead Black Feather Cranes, they knew that the group must have been killed. A middle-aged man in the lead stood there, frowning.

“Two of the Black Feather Cranes died from their hearts exploding. There are no traces of them engaging in battle. It seems like they've been suppressed by the Qi of an expert and killed,” after taking a look, an old man said softly.

“Even an ordinary Peak Martial Saint would find it hard to use Qi to kill Peak Martial King demonic beasts.” The middle-aged man frowned, shaking his head.

“Go back and check who Young Master has offended. Let’s go!” The middle-aged man frowned but there was no sign of grief on his face.

...

By this time, Qing Shui had already arrived in another city. However, he had no intention of staying. He wanted to get to Eastern Victory Divine Continent as soon as possible. The journey was not short and even with the current Fire Bird and Nine Continents Steps, it would still take a very long time, at least half a year or more. Moreover, even if he had reached the Eastern Victory Divine Continent, he still needed to head to the eastmost point of the Eastern Victory Divine Continent.

When it was dark, Qing Shui found that he had once again arrived in the wilderness between two cities. Looking at the time, he directly entered the Realm of the Violet Jade Immortal. Qing Shui could not even be bothered to set up his tent. After he had stayed long enough in the Realm of the Violet Jade Immortal, he would continue on his way straightaway, even if it was at night.

The moment he entered, Qing Shui picked up the Spirit Gathering Lamp.

It felt very heavy and gave off a strong aura. This gave him a comfortable feeling. The only thing was that Qing Shui felt that this Spirit Gathering Lamp was very tattered and old.

Temper!

Qing Shui started to temper it but before he did, he instinctively looked at it with his Heavenly Vision Technique.

Spirit Gathering Lamp !

It was an ancient piece and the user could increase the spiritual energy of all tamed beasts which were engaged in battle, causing the attack prowess of the beast tamer's skills to increase. The increase was related to its grade. Passive treasure, zero energy expenditure!

It was currently at grade zero!

Qing Shui had not expected this to be the same as the Spirit Gathering Lamp he knew of. The only thing which he found regretful was that its grade was too low. But thinking about it, if its grade was high, just the powerful spiritual energy it exuded would let people feel that it was no ordinary item. Therefore, he should be happy that it was at grade zero.

Usually, the time required for him to temper something, to bring it from grade zero to grade one, was very short, therefore Qing Shui did not wish to waste any time. He quickly went through one round. With the time ratio in the Realm of the Violet Jade Immortal increased greatly, he hoped that by the time he had reached the Eastern Victory Divine Continent, the Spirit Gathering Lamp would reach a good grade.

He did not know if it was because his abilities had increased or if there were other reasons. Now, Qing Shui could temper each of these treasures for twenty times daily!

During the process of tempering, a faint dark green glow was emitted by the Spirit Gathering Lamp. However, as it was still blocked by the impurities on the surface, only hints of green light could be seen. Just by looks alone, it was hard to relate this to a treasure.

AST 849 – Level One Spirit Gathering Lamp, Sky City, Octagon Inn

After tempering it twenty times in a row, Qing Shui then tempered the Soulshake Bell, Demon Binding Ropes and even the Blackjade Poisonous Spiderweb. Qing Shui didn't know about the Blackjade Poisonous Spiderweb and he knew that it was impossible for him to know of all such treasures. Therefore, the Blackjade Poisonous Spiderweb should be a treasure of a similar type to the Demon Binding Ropes and Soulshake Bell. However, the Blackjade Poisonous Spiderweb not only needed to be leveled up, it would also need to be tempered with some powerful poison.

After tempering these items, he went to where the plum blossoms were to practice Taichi for an hour. After the Realm of the Violet Jade Immortal had leveled up to the seventh heavenly layer, there were twice as many plum blossoms as before.

The area of the Realm of the Violet Jade Immortal was quite wide. This was an area which belonged to him alone. It could not be said to be very big but its length and width of 10,000 meters was considered quite good. Moreover, this place was a rich wonderland.

Very quickly, a month passed in the Realm of the Violet Jade Immortal!

This day, Qing Shui was tempering the Spirit Gathering Lamp as usual. On the eighth attempt, a glow which was many times brighter than before lit up. This flow was very familiar to him.

When the Soulshake Bell and Demon Binding Ropes leveling up to a higher grade, they had also released such a brilliant light.

Qing Shui held back his curiosity and finished up with the remaining twelve rounds of tempering. He then looked at the Spirit Gathering Lamp which looked like a layer of impurities had been removed. Although it still did not appear to be spotlessly clean of impurities, compared to before it was a tremendous change. It now appeared very dignified and pure.

He looked toward it with his Heavenly Vision Technique once again.

Spirit Gathering Lamp !

It was an ancient piece and the user could increase the spiritual energy of all tamed beasts which were engaged in battle, causing the attack prowess of the beast tamer's skills to increase. The increase was related to its grade. Passive treasure, zero energy expenditure!

At grade one, there were slight changes!

It took him a month to bring it to grade one, which meant that it would take at least three months to reach grade two and one year to reach grade three. Qing Shui could make this estimation just by looking at the Soulshake Bell and Demon Binding Ropes. It was all good now. The Realm of the Violet Jade Immortal had leveled up to the seventh heavenly layer and compared to before, he would be

able to save half the time required.

If not for the Realm of the Violet Jade Immortal, with such a high expenditure for time, even a Martial Saint with 1,000 years of lifespan would not have enough time!

Qing Shui brought the Fire Bird and Thunderous Beast to a spacious area in the Realm of the Violet Jade Immortal. Given that the realm now had a length and width of twenty li, this space he had was still considerably big. In the future, he would not have to worry about having no space to store any of the good things he may come across.

He then let the Fire Bird and Thunderous Beast perform the Nether Fireball and Thunderbolt. When that pitch-black fireball and purplish Thunderbolt appeared, Qing Shui was stunned. He looked at the Spirit Gathering Lamp in his hand in a daze.

Earlier, in order to know clearly the prowess of the Spirit Gathering Lamp, Qing Shui had sensed the prowess of both the Fire Bird and Thunderous Beast before he had started tempering. Therefore, after it had reached grade one, he could not wait to try it out to see if there has been any changes to their attacks.

He had not expected that the results would be so powerful!

About 10% of the prowess of magic was increased...

Thinking about it, Qing Shui smiled. The Spirit Gathering Lamp

he knew of was a bit useless. If it wasn't at the highest grade, there was basically not much effect. However, to think that for this Spirit Gathering Lamp, the prowess was already so great when it was just at grade one.

This was the power that a treasure should have. It was now all good. By the time he arrived at the Eastern Victory Divine Continent, the prowess of the Spirit Gathering Lamp would definitely be very great. More importantly, his Realm of the Violet Jade Immortal could be treated as a magic treasure box while others could only hold it in their hands if they were to use it.

Having seen the prowess of the Spirit Gathering Lamp, Qing Shui was beyond happy. His trip to the Central Continent was not wasted. Not only could the Spirit Gathering Lamp increase the attacking prowess of the Thunderous Beast's Thunderbolt and Violet Lightning Strike, it could also strengthen the additional effects the attacks brought, such as being able to reduce the target's speed, reaction and sensing abilities faster than before. It could also increase the duration of the paralyzing effect. When the Spirit Gathering Lamp's grade increased, its prowess would be even more powerful.

Qing Shui then tested the attacks of the Diamond Gigantic Elephant and Ten Thousand Poisonous Violet Sable. However, there was no difference from before its grade had increased. He also did not notice much change to the Gold-Silver Colored Butterflies or Jade Emperor Queen Bee. It seemed like it was only effective toward magic.

This time around, the slight increase in the grade of the Spirit

Gathering Lamp gave Qing Shui great hope. He thought about how he could crush his opponents just by relying on the Thunderous Beast alone.

...

Two months later, Qing Shui stood on the streets of the last city in the east of the Central Continent. He was planning to stay here for a day before going through that barren land which stretched for who knows how far and then head for the Eastern Victory Divine Continent.

There was another reason Qing Shui decided to stop by. It was because this city was known as the Sky City!

Sky City!

This was an existence that was in the same circle as the Demon Gate, Dragon Emperor Mountain and Tang Manor. However, he did not know why the city was called the Sky City. Could it be that faction was also called the Sky City?

Or was it because the faction was located in the Sky City?

Or was it a coincidence that both names were the same?

Qing Shui was regretting that he had not asked Tang Wude the reason behind this.

The location of the Sky City was very high. This could be said to be a city located in the high plains. This huge city was also very mysterious. It was taller than the surrounding area by 10,000 meters. In Qing Shui's mind, this was a city located on a plateau.

The Sky City was extraordinarily prosperous. It was not affected by the fact that it was on a plateau. There was no feeling of being oxygen deprived but rather, it felt as if the spiritual energy was stronger than other places. This was the city where there were the most interactions between the Eastern Victory Divine Continent and Central Continent. Unless people flew past it, they would all need to pass by this Sky City.

Qing Shui stopped a beast carriage and headed for the biggest restaurant in the area. He had many questions and thus a restaurant was a good place for him to head to.

Octagon Inn !

Looking at this name, Qing Shui smiled. He had come across many restaurants and inns but there were not many whose names were able to interest him. The Earthly Paradise which Canghai Mingyue and Huoyun Liu-Li had run in the past was one whose name had interested him. He had also come across a few of them later on, one of which was Hundred Flowers Inn but it was a pity that it was a brothel.

Looking at the Octagon Inn, Qing Shui could not help but think of the Four Seas Inn. Places which dared to put up a signboard

similar to this tended to be managed by a powerful faction, just like the Emperor City Auction Hall in the Central Continent, as well as those places which dared to use the names of the city directly.

“I wonder if this Octagon Inn has any relation to the Sky City?” Qing Shui smiled and walked in.

The Octagon Inn took up a very large piece of land and it was also very tall. It was a nine storey building, with each storey being over ten meters. It was looked as luxurious as a palace, with the entire building a jade blue color. There were eight corners to the building, facing eight directions, giving the Octagon Inn an air of nobility and dominance.

The Octagon Inn had a long dark red colored carpet which stretched out very far. All the people who passed through the building were all dressed in silk and satin as the aura exuded by the Octagon Inn which would keep poor people away.

Of course, there were also exceptions, for example, people who had strong powers. The Octagon Inn would not stop anyone from entering but upon entering, one must be able to pay. It would be a joke if the person were to dine and dash. There were not many people who would be able to stay safe after an attempt to dine and dash.

Qing Shui had a dignified appearance, wearing a pure white Lunar Silk Garment which made him look even taller. As he walked, there was an indescribable rhythm and he entered the Octagon Inn with an expression that was that of great ease.

“Sir, is there anything I can help you with?” A pleasant young female voice rang out.

Qing Shui turned to see a lady wearing a uniform, smiling.

“I want a room and food!”

“Which level do you plan to stay at?” The lady smiled and asked.

“Oh? Is there a difference?”

“It costs a hundred gold taels daily to stay in the first storey. With each increasing storey, the price doubles. Of course, the higher the storey you stay in, the better the quality provided and the service is better as well,” the lady smiled and explained it simply.

Even Qing Shui, who was never concerned about money, could not help but lament at how the place was a money depleting den, although he could smell the intoxicating fragrance of food and see the comfortable environment on the first storey. The customer service was also very good, giving one the feeling that one was above all other people. Moreover, coming here was representative of one's identity.

Qing Shui did not know if it was because of the faction behind the Octagon Inn. And what services did they provide?

Women's charms should not be the reason these people come here. Those who could afford to come here could be said to not be lacking in women. Of course, there was the exception of top notch beauties since there were too few of them around. Therefore, this was not a possibility.

Staying one day on the ninth storey cost 25,600 gold taels!

"I'd like to stay on the ninth storey for a day. Are there any unique features on the ninth storey?" Qing Shui smiled and asked.

"There would be an elementary Martial Saint beauty who would accompany you for a drink. However, this is on the condition that she is agreeable. Moreover, it would not exceed 15 minutes." The lady smiled and said.

Martial Saint beauty's accompanying him for a drink?

This innovation...

Qing Shui was stunned. Even though the person would only accompany for a short while and it was on the condition that she was agreeable to it, this was the first time he had heard of such a thing. After all, a Martial Saint would be a brilliant existence no matter where one was. Moreover, it was one who was young and beautiful.

"Sir, if you were to decide on the ninth floor, Miss Feng Wu would definitely join you for a drink." The waitress smiled and

said.

“Are there many people who stay on the ninth floor?” Qing Shui looked up and asked.

“There are!” The waitress smiled and said.

“How many Martial Saint young ladies there are in Octagon Inn who join guests for a drink?” Qing Shui smiled and asked. How could a beautiful a beautiful Martial Saint be here to accompany men who stank of money for a drink? Although there would be no skin contact, this was something that was almost impossible. Moreover, she would be treated as an esteemed guest no matter where she went with her status as a Martial Saint. Unless there were other reasons, those men who were powerful would probably not leave her alone.

These doubts made Qing Shui really want to meet this lady called Feng Wu.

“Only Miss Feng Wu is a Martial Saint.” The lady smiled and answered.

“Then is she able to cope?” Qing Shui continued to ask.

“That’s why she makes the decision if she wants to join the guest for a drink and only 15 minutes for each guest at most.” The lady seemed to be reminding Qing Shui that he could not blame anyone even if there was no one to accompany him even if he had spent

the money. The person can only blame himself for not being handsome.

Qing Shui headed up with the waitress after everything was decided. Even he would not be able to spend over 20,000 gold taels a day. Although he had quite a lot of silver notes and other jewels, he would not be able to handle spending money like this.

It seemed like he was still considered poor. Looking at the Realm of the Violet Jade Immortal, he decided to throw in money whenever he gets his hand on some in the future...

AST 850 – Marionette Sect, Nine Yang

Marionette King

Qing Shui followed the waitress and slowly ascended to the upper floors. Along the way, he realized that the business model of the Octagon Inn was significantly different than the other inns he had visited. The lowest cultivation base of the waitresses was Xiantian and yet all of them were young and beautiful. Nevertheless, the waitresses were sufficient to satisfy the vanity and psychological needs of most martial warriors and wealthy merchants.

The architectural style and the atmosphere of the Octagon Inn was more or less similar to the other inns. However, Octagon Inn was a bit unique, in the sense that the waitresses assigned on each floor were different. The higher the floor level, the stronger the waitress would become and they would be progressively prettier than the previous floors.

As he climbed the floors slowly, he also noticed that each level was almost 70% occupied by patrons. Based on that alone, the profit of the Octagon Inn for one day would be immeasurable. Fortunately, the expenses on the food and utilities of the inn were considered modest. If they didn't contribute part of the profits to the improvement of their service quality, it would be difficult to maintain their business in the long term.

The area of each floor had also become progressively smaller. The higher the floor level, the fewer the number the patrons would be. The number of patrons decreased considerably starting from the sixth floor. The seventh floor had fewer than hundred patrons and the eighth floor had less than twenty. On the ninth

floor, there were only three people.....

“Perhaps some of them are inside the private rooms.” Qing Shui thought.

Qing Shui chose a room close to the corner where he could overlook the scenery outside from the windows. Moreover, he chose the room because it was significantly brighter than the other rooms.

“Please wait for a moment, sir. We will serve the dishes shortly. I will inform Miss Huang Wu and check on her schedule.” The waitress showed a smile before she left the room for her duties.

Feeling bored, Qing Shui decided to check around the room. The area of the living room was about a hundred square meters, where it had access to the bathroom, kitchen and two bedrooms. The entire room was filled with a refreshing air and there was no dust to be seen. The floors and the walls were all white, giving the room an impression of purity and holiness.

Knock knock knock!

“Come in!” Qing Shui commanded.

As the door opened, eight waitresses wearing neat uniforms entered in succession, each carrying eight smaller dishes on their trays. The dishes looked appetizing, with the delicious aroma filling the room within seconds.

Eight waitresses each with eight dishes, totalling to about 64 dishes altogether.....

Would he be able to finish everything? The staggering amount of dishes wasn't strange at all when Qing Shui realized the amount of money he had paid for this room. After the waitresses had left, Qing Shui sat down in front of a long end table without touching the dishes. There were two pairs of chopsticks in front of the dishes as well.

After the time to burn a stick of incense had passed, Qing Shui finally picked up his chopsticks to begin his feast. Just when he was about to eat the food....

Knock knock knock!

Someone knocked on the door.

"Come in!" said Qing Shui as he put down his chopsticks.

The door opened and a came in a beautiful woman. Qing Shui could tell that she was Huang Wu simply by her aura. She seemed quite young despite her tall, seductive figure, which could not be overlooked even with a black stylish dress draping her body.

Her brows were curved like the sickle of a new moon and her lashes curled and elongated, which complemented her pretty eyes, as if she was smiling, albeit subtly. The straight bridge of her nose

was the centerpiece of her delicate face and there was a hint of individuality on her pouty red lips, in contrast to her smooth skin which was as white as snow.

However, there was something else emitting from her body – a strange aura that felt quite forceful to him!

Her cultivation techniques were of the metal element!

“Are you not going to invite me to sit down?” The woman noticed Qing Shui staring at her but without a shred of excitement or eroticism. From the beginning, his expression was as calm as the serene waters, which ironically caused her heart to skip a beat.

She had a pleasant voice that could sooth the hearts of those who heard it. Realizing his manners, Qing Shui stood up and gave a warm smile as he said, “Please, sit down!”

Huang Wu was startled after she found herself developing an interest in this young man. She knew he was different from the first moment she saw him. Even though she couldn’t feel his true strength, she could still tell how strong he was based on her intuition.

Qing Shui was actually shocked as well. She was a Grade Five Martial Saint..... Which was the same as Di Chen. He also found it odd that a woman of such strength would work here as a hostess to entertain male guests.

“Miss, why do you choose to work here despite possessing such ability?” Qing Shui was curious. If she needed money, she could easily acquire it from the countless admirers in the city. Moreover, she might be someone with an influential status, otherwise she would not be able to stay here without any problems.

Maybe she had the support of a powerful force behind the Octagon Inn?

“Do you think I am shameless for doing so?” The woman asked softly as she smiled at him. However, Qing Shui was still unmoved by her charm.

“No, I don’t. There’s no difference between nobility nor humility in life. We are, however, all born in different classes,” Qing Shui replied as he shook his head gently.

“Then you are saying that I’m shameless.”

“I only said there’s no nobleness and lowliness in life. Perhaps you are looking down on everything you’ve done?” Qing Shui looked at the beautiful woman, yet he could never bring himself to be swayed by her appearance nor her behavior.

“Alright, let’s not talk about that anymore. Let’s talk about something more cheerful.” The woman beamed.

“Sure. Do you know the origins of the name ‘Sky City’?” asked Qing Shui without hesitation. He didn’t have much time, so

naturally, he decided to retrieve as much relevant information as he could from her.

“Actually, there’s no clear explanation on that. Some say that the city occupies an extremely high ground, almost to the point of touching the sky. Thus, the ‘Sky City’ was adapted. Others say that there’s a small inner city located at the highest peak of the city, which is ironically known as the ‘Sky City’ as well. In the end, the entire city was renamed as the ‘Sky City’,” the woman said without rushing her words.

“This Sky City should be the same powerful city I was told about!” Qing Shui murmured, as if he was talking to himself.

Half an hour had passed. The woman didn’t intend to leave yet, so Qing Shui picked up the wine and poured a cup for her. Then he poured himself some as well.

“I see that you’re quite powerful. Have you ever thought about looking for a powerful advocate?” The pretty woman swivelled her cup for a while before pursing her lips to drink the wine.

Qing Shui picked up his cup and drank the wine as well. Then he lowered his head and squinted his eyes for a brief second. The woman couldn’t see his face clearly when he had lowered his head but if she did, she would have seen the coldness in his eyes. Qing Shui, however, maintained his smile and replied in a soft tone.

“You mean an advocate like you? You seem alright but not strong enough,” replied Qing Shui. His eyes seemed a little bit colder than

earlier.

“Of course I’m not strong enough. But I can introduce you to a powerful force. If you are willing, you will get all the money, skills, medicinal pills and women of your choosing. How about it?”

“I might be inexperienced but I still have some knowledge about the powerful forces in the Central Continent. May I know what kind of ‘powerful force’ you meant earlier? At least you can tell me that, right?” said Qing Shui as he looked at the beautiful woman with slight anticipation.

“We are from the Marionette Sect,” the woman said in a calm tone while flashing a smile to Qing Shui.

“So the drug you slipped in was to nurture me as a marionette for your sect.” Qing Shui turned to the woman and locked his terrifying aura to suppress her movement.

“You are actually unaffected?” Her face turned pale as she stared at Qing Shui with a surprised expression.

Qing Shui knew exactly why she had approached him – she was not simply a woman who was employed to entertain guests but a woman to select marionettes for the Marionette Sect. Her goal was to find those with decent cultivation through a reliable network before marking her targets. Regardless how much those wealthy traders or merchants paid to see her, she would not entertain them, as they were unsuitable to become a marionette for her sect.

Qing Shui was no stranger to the term 'marionette'. Marionettes were divided into various categories or realms. The lowest realm would be those of a walking corpse with high defenses refined from drugs and potions, unsusceptible to the sharp edge of a blade. However, this type of marionette would lack the basic intelligence of a human being, replaced with a basic instinct to attack until the brain or the heart had been struck or crushed. Marionettes of this type were immune to the sensation of pain from broken arms or legs. The power they could unleash was limited to 30% of their overall strength.

The next level of marionettes would maintain their basic yet elementary intelligence, as they would possess the basic instinct to evade deadly attacks. The power they could unleash would be limited to half of their overall strength.

As the level of the marionettes progressed, the limitation to their strength would decrease and they would be able to restore a progressive amount of intelligence. The highest level of marionettes were rumored to be different, as they could unleash power a few times stronger than their overall ability. Not only would they become increasingly stronger than a mighty demonic beast, they would behave like an ordinary human with a functioning intelligence capable of processing complex thoughts.

In any case, the acts of the Marionette Sect were still unbelievably terrifying. They could be considered an elite sect, much more formidable than those skilled in utilizing poison. The Marionette Sect was more or less similar to those sects that specialized in beast taming – a beast tamer's goal was to tame demonic beasts, while the goal of the Marionette Sect was to control a human being. Demonic beasts were no exception to the

Marionette Sect, albeit rare, as these beasts could become marionette beasts after a successful nurturing of their mind and body.

Moreover, marionettes have a time limit to function as they were intended. After a certain amount of time, marionettes must consume a special medicinal pill that allows the continuous control of their state of mind. In spite of that, a marionette of a higher level would be able to retaliate as they possessed a stronger state of mind but would not be able to dispel the control of a marionette master completely.

“Why did you target me?” Qing Shui observed the woman. She was as beautiful as a blooming flower but her heart was as venomous as a poisonous scorpion. Qing Shui would have never expected her to be such a woman from the first glance. Truly, one could never judge someone solely by their appearance!

“No matter. If I knew this would happen, I would have slipped a greater amount of drugs into your wine. I didn’t think you would possess such terrifying power. Why did we choose you? Because your body is very suitable to become the ‘Nine Yang Marionette King’. I have already contacted the Grand Elder. Soon the Old Ancestor will nurture you to become the strongest marionette king the world will ever know.” The woman spoke at a casual pace, undisturbed by Qing Shui’s demeanor.

“I can kill you easily right now, do you believe that?” Qing Shui looked at her with a perplexed expression, confused as to why the woman was still confident despite his threat.

“It’s too late now!” She shook her head and fled.

The door suddenly burst open, followed by an old man entering the room.

Qing Shui felt goosebumps as soon as he saw the abrupt appearance of the old man. All he could think of was to escape from this room as soon as possible. But before he could, the room suddenly felt like a torrid purgatory as he became increasingly uncomfortable. However, it was still bearable as the suffocating sensation was considerably weaker than that of the woman in the crystal coffin.

In addition, his spiritual energy had become remarkably stronger after the incident with the woman in the crystal coffin, which was why he was able to endure the suffocating force of his opponent despite his current strength.

And that begged the question: What was the highest power a Peak Martial Saint could possess?

The strength of ten stars was essentially an enlightenment towards the Martial Emperor but that was just it, an enlightenment. He couldn’t sense the power of this Grand Elder of the Marionette Sect but he could tell that he wasn’t a Martial Emperor. However, this old man was undoubtedly far stronger than Qing Shui currently was.

The Grand Elder of the Marionette Sect.... Seemed like in every supreme sect exists at least one extraordinary martial warrior.

Only when Qing Shui had reached a higher platform did he realize there were other stronger existences in this world.

When he was a Xiantian warrior back then, all he could see was other significantly stronger Xiantian martial warriors. If he didn't manage to reach a certain realm of cultivation, he would never cross his path with any powerful martial warriors at all. As he gained his power progressively, the stronger ones would begin to emerge, much to his chagrin. If he were to come here with the strength of a Xiantian, he would have never realized the existence of a stronger force, nor he would cross his path with them. Just like this Octagon Inn, he would never be able to ascend to the ninth floor, as that privilege would be stripped from him immediately.

AST 851 – Nine Yang Golden Body, Confounded Retreat

“Grand Elder, today’s the lucky day. We have finally found the man with the legendary ‘Nine Yang Golden Body,’” The woman named Huang Wu said to the old man in a respectful tone.

Qing Shui, on the other hand, quickly raised his cautiousness and carefully observed the old man. He couldn’t pinpoint the old man’s exact age but the geezer was certainly old, as evidenced by his withering appearance. The old man was also wearing a full set of plain clothes – the simplest, most common clothes in the market – over his moderately thin body. In spite of his appearance, the old man’s eyes were gleaming with a bizarre mannerism – it was weird and perplexing.

When Qing Shui saw the old man’s cane, he froze. That was the Dragon-Headed Cane, if not very similar to the one kept in the Realm of the Violet Jade Immortal. There wasn’t any obvious difference in terms of their appearances, so for Qing Shui, the canes were of the same kind.

The old man snapped his attention to Qing Shui and revealed a grin. His eyes were transfixed on Qing Shui as he said, “Haha, this is great. I’ve been searching for 300 years for the legendary Nine Yang Golden Body and was about to give up, until you showed up to our doorstep. Thank the Heavens for treating me so well.”

“Nine Yang Golden Body?” This was the second time Qing Shui heard of this term that was supposedly a type of special constitution of a human body. However, he was extremely

bewildered because he had heard two different terms to this constitution. In the case of the Marionette Sect, it was the 'Nine Yang Golden Body'. For the outsiders, it wasn't the Nine Yang but the body of 'Nine Yin' Instead.

Qing Shui was essentially a marionette to this old man – a marionette that could potentially become the Nine Yang Marionette King.

The lower levelled marionettes were more or less walking corpses but they were not dead entirely, as their bodily functions, like the heart, were still intact – all except the brain. In other words, the brain was dead, thus rendering the marionette the incapability of utilizing the basic cognitive functions. Marionettes of lower levels would always display such behavior and as such, the chances of retaliation would be extremely low.

The 'Nine Yang Golden Body' was said to be the strongest constitution amongst the other types of constitution for a marionette in the Marionette Sect. Moreover, whoever could obtain such person of said constitution would be able to reach the top level with just the control of the Body, thus achieving the greatest dream a marionette master could strive for. Should they achieve the process of nurturing a marionette to become the Nine Yang Marionette King, the influence and power of the Marionette Sect would never be underestimated ever again.

The old man maintained his gaze on Qing Shui while shivering with an overwhelming sense of excitement.

Qing Shui's first instinct was to escape quickly as he clearly had

no confidence in winning against this old man. In the presence of absolute power, everything was futile. He feared that he wouldn't be able to kill his opponent even with the deadly forces of his Primordial Flame Ball and Poison Weapons. So the only realistic way was to run when he had the chance to.

Fortunately for Qing Shui, he wasn't as helpless as he was during the time he faced the woman in the crystal coffin. Last time, his powers and body were confined and restricted, so he wasn't able to retaliate or move his muscles. So while he had the freedom to move this time, he decided to think of ways to escape this predicament as soon as possible.

"Enough. Don't even think of escaping, because you can't. If you try anything, I will make sure you suffer the consequence of doing so," said the old man as he curved a sly smile on his face.

"Such confidence? Then this Octagon Inn must be the front of your Marionette Sect!" Qing Shui laughed.

"And you're still able to laugh? You're right, this Octagon Inn is one of the many outposts of the Marionette Sect. All these years, this outpost had acquired a lot of decent marionettes for our sect." The old man spoke with pride, as if using the Octagon Inn as a bait to capture potential marionettes was the greatest idea the Marionette Sect ever had.

Qing Shui gathered up all his power within the body and raised his spiritual energy to the maximum. His hand shivered for a moment, then with a quick movement, he shot out ten poisonous Ten Thousand Coldsteel Needles toward his opponents

instantaneously!

Petal Rain Under The Skies!

At the same time, Qing Shui exerted his force on his feet and released the Mighty Elephant Stomp!

In a mere second, Qing Shui instantly fell to the lower floors – from the ninth floor to the ground floor – like an ‘atomic bomb’ of a tremendous force. He was able to escape swiftly in the midst of chaos in the Octagon Inn.

Nine Continents Steps!

After Qing Shui had managed to escape through the use of the Nine Continents Steps, the entire Octagon Inn began to collapse instantaneously, killing the unfortunate souls unwittingly caught in the crumbling of the building. The patrons were consisted of men from the supreme aristocratic clans and wealthy merchants, so Qing Shui didn’t feel pity when most of them had died. Those who were able to escape were people of martial cultivators. While some of them were fine, most of them were injured from the falling debris.

The thought of using the 10,000 Years Coldsteel Needles to inflict heavy damage on the old man didn’t cross his mind but the needles were sufficient to block against the Grand Elder’s assault, allowing a small window of time to escape from the predicament.

The old man and the woman quickly dashed outwards, hovering in mid-air as they scanned the area below with attentive eyes. However, no matter where they looked, they just couldn't seem to find the silhouette of that young man. Realizing something was wrong, they quickly glanced at the heap of debris below their feet.

“He should be here. Why can't I feel his aura?” The old man ordered his men to remove the debris with haste. Even if they had to dig up the soil below three feet, they must find him – dead or alive.

Unbeknownst to the old man, Qing Shui had already escaped ten thousand li away from the scene through his Nine Continents Steps. He immediately mounted on the Fire Bird without hesitation and flew as far as he could. This incident in addition to the one with the woman in the crystal coffin had made him realize the great disparity between his power and that of his opponents. The road to the top of the martial arts world was still quite far.

He could initiate a split-second kill if he were to fight against martial warriors of the same level. But in the scenario against a higher levelled opponent, it would be difficult as the disparity of strength was too great. If he were to combat against the old man alone, he might be able to land a few hits. However, that thought immediately vanished when he sensed a tremendous amount of strength emitting from the old man's body. He wouldn't be able to win anyway, so without a second thought, he chose to escape.

Against the old man alone, Qing Shui might have half a chance of winning, especially if he used the Thunderous Beast's Violet Lightning Strike and his own Divinity Protection. The Divinity

Protection may prove to be ineffective should he clash with the old man but if the Violet Lightning Strike was able to show an effect, then the old man would surely die.

Power, he needed to gain more power!

At that moment, Qing Shui found himself wanting more power, his desire grew stronger the more he felt helpless. If he could break through the Seventh Heavenly Layer of his Ancient Strengthening Technique, killing the old fool would be a piece of cake.....

Qing Shui had currently reached an area of wasteland that stretched toward the path of the Eastern Victory Divine Continent. He finally felt at ease as he rode on his Fire Bird, despite the subtle nervousness during his focus to escape the grasp of the old man. He wasn't too worried, because he knew he could escape for safety and destroy the Octagon Inn at the same time.

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At the same time, the Grand Elder of the 'Octagon Inn' was on the verge of going mad. He released his anger at the mountain-pile of debris, feeling dejected as ever.....

A number of old men and sect members stood behind the Grand Elder with frowns on their faces. They were so close in snatching a marionette of the Nine Yang Golden Body and now they had lost the chance.

.....

Qing Shui kept his eyes on his surroundings before affirming the safety of his current position. He urged his Fire Bird to fly as fast as possible as the sky began to light up brightly, indicating the current hour to be afternoon. Due to his quick reaction and swiftness, he had managed to lose the pursuers from the Marionette Sect completely.

He didn't expect the Grand Elder to reveal his own constitution as the Nine Yang Golden Body, much less possessing a body of extraordinary power too. Qing Shui didn't think he was born with the Nine Yang Golden Body but an outcome of an illusion wrought by the cultivation of the Ancient Strengthening Technique.

He shook his head and dispersed the confusing thoughts. He didn't care if he had the Nine Yang Golden Body or not, nothing felt satiated unless he had the Ancient Strengthening Technique and the Realm of the Violet Jade Immortal, as well as everything he had owned until now. If only he had the opportunity to gain an immense power, he would be able to reach the heights of the entire continents in the world as he had dreamed of. By then, he could do whatever he wanted and do the things he had been wanting to do.

He had been running relentlessly for the whole day. It wasn't until the sky had turned dark that Qing Shui finally took the time to enter the Realm of the Violet Jade Immortal.

With the Realm of the Violet Jade Immortal as his haven, Qing Shui felt happy as this place was private space of absolute safety. When he was inside, he had practically spent 100 days or three

months, doing absolutely everything to strengthen his cultivation and artifacts. Moreover, a lot of things could change within three months but in reality, Qing Shui had only spent six hours of real time strengthening techniques and his power.

He also took some time to temper some artifacts!

After a lengthy period, the Spirit Gathering Lamp had reached Grade Three!

The Spirit Gathering Lamp: An ancient artifact that could allow the user to increase the spiritual power of their demonic beasts engaged in a battle, thus increasing the attacking prowess of the demonic beasts. Moreover, the increase was in correlation to the realm of the grade. A passive artifact with zero energy consumption, the lamp was now in Grade Three, which had further increased the efficiency of its usage.

Qing Shui was particularly pleased with the 30% increase to the demonic beasts' powers. Even though the speed of the advancement was comparably different than before and the time required to level up seemed longer, that had little effect on his pleasant mood. As long as the progress remained on the steady path, everything would be fine.

Soulshake Bell: Grade Seven. The Soulshake Bell had a superb effect that would be extremely formidable against most demonic beast. There would also be an absolute hit on demonic beasts of Peak Martial King. If death was not meant to be, then they would certainly be crippled. The bell has an extraordinary effect on Martial Saints as well.

Demon Binding Ropes: Grade Six. The ropes could overcome powerful opponents of greater strength easily.

Qing Shui hadn't been using the Demon Binding Ropes for quite a while, so he wasn't sure what kind of power the ropes could possess for now. The further the realm, the longer the time required for the upgrade would be. Speaking of upgrade, it has been a while since the Soulshake Bell and the Demon Binding Ropes hadn't achieve a breakthrough.

The speed of upgrade of the Blackjade Poisonous Spiderweb and the Spirit Gathering Lamp seemed a little bit slower. Regardless, the Blackjade Poisonous Spiderweb was now in the Grade Four – the best among the other weapons!

Despite the increase to its battle prowess, the time required for the upgrade was uncertain. However, one thing's for certain – the magical treasure has the ability to nurture a person to a powerful warrior once the artifact had reached the final realm. In extreme cases, a magical treasure could even bring forth a destruction to the world.

If he didn't have the Realm of the Violet Jade Immortal, the realm of the magical treasure may require a longer period of time to break through. But when he thought about the immense power the magical treasure could potentially achieve, he didn't mind waiting even for a few more years as he was quite confident that his Realm of the Violet Jade Immortal could hasten the process without a hitch.

Talisman Drawing!

The drawing of the [Hundred Forms of the Tiger] and the ‘Realm of Drawing Bones’ was just on an elementary level. There was still a long way to go despite the potential growth of his drawing. Luckily, he still had an ample time to advance his drawings, so the only problem he had was the accumulation of time. If he continued to put a constant effort to his drawings, he would eventually yield a great success.

.....

Qing Shui continued his way to the east the next day. With a lot of free time on his hands, he decided to look at the [Hundred Forms of the Tiger] and the [Poison Scripture] while mounted on his Fire Bird through the long dull journey. He would also ponder over a few things sometimes. As he had been busy for the past few days, he left practically left no room to think some things through.

He didn’t need to ponder over some matters purposely as everything had happened according to his will. Moreover, he had no choice and most times he was required to act as quickly as he could. After he had calmed himself down, the first thing that popped into his mind was the matters involving his romance.

Qing Shui felt quite troubled thinking about his relationships with his wives. He had never doubted himself as someone who was extremely possessive with the ladies. He couldn’t give up on them, yet he clearly understood that he shouldn’t be promiscuous with any women he met. Falling in love was easy, as feelings could develop in a mere few seconds. It would be hard to get along with

each other over time but it would be way harder to forget about someone he truly loved. The worst part about any relationship was getting along with a few exceptional women, as it would be the hardest situation a man could face in his lifetime.

In any case, the ladies had practically never asked him to love them solely or even pester him with that matter. They didn't even limit the number of women he could love either.....

Perhaps this was the custom in the World of the Nine Continents. Even though all men and women were considered equal, men were allowed to wed multiples times and have numerous wives but no one would hear the news of a woman having multiple husbands. The reason may have to do with the majority of martial warriors being male. Essentially 90% of men had dominated the martial arts scene in the World of the Nine Continents.

After the time was almost right, he recalled his Fire Bird.

Nine Continents Steps!

He had to use the Nine Continents Steps once every single day despite this technique being weaker than before due to the improved speed of his Fire Bird.

Qing Shui always knew something was different but he couldn't explain what exactly had changed.

Suddenly, Qing Shui glanced down at the Nine Continent Boots

on his feet!

AST 852 – Leveled Up Nine Continents Steps, Arriving At Eastern Victory Divine Continent

Qing Shui put his focus on the Nine Continent Boots. He felt that this time around, his Nine Continent Boots was very different from how it used to be but he could not find the words to describe it. However, very quickly, he used the Heavenly Vision Technique on the Nine Continent Boots.

The Nine Continent Boots, increases speed to become twice as fast, reducing energy expenditure greatly. Those below Martial Emperor level are unable to inflict any damage on it and it comes with the battle technique, Nine Continent Steps.

Nine Continent Steps: Use the Nine Continent Boots to activate the Nine Continents Steps. The user will immediately travel 200,000 li in a straight line. It could also allow one to control the target location up to 100,000 li away with their mind. It was currently at level two and had gone through some slight leveling up and could be used twice a day.

Prerequisite: Martial Saint level!

“Mmm, the Nine Continents Steps has levelled up, it’s now at level two!” Qing Shui could not help but exclaimed happily. In the past, after seeing the description of the Nine Continent Boots which said that the Nine Continents Steps could level up but had not after so long, Qing Shui no longer placed much hope in it. However, to think that it had leveled up now. And the distance was

increased to be twice as long as before. Qing Shui was elated, especially now that he could use it twice a day and he could control the distance as well. Otherwise, he would always end up exceeding where he was intending to go and it would be very depressing...

Being able to use the Nine Continents Steps twice would mean that he would be able to travel further than what the Fire Bird could travel at its greatest speed. Most importantly, Qing Shui was now given another lifeline. It took only a moment to activate the Nine Continents Steps. As long as he was not suddenly locked down with the spirit energy of powerful experts, he would be fine.

The Nine Continents Steps at the second level allowed him to travel 200,000 li away twice. Then at level three, level four... Who knew how many levels the Nine Continent Boots could advance to? Qing Shui didn't know if it would reach level nine, ten or even fifteen but regardless, it was already considered extremely powerful. In the future, if he were to travel 100,000 or 200,000 li away, he would only need to think of it and move slightly. After having leveled up, the Nine Continent Boots were much more powerful than before.

When good things came, they came one after another. When unfortunate things came, no one would be able to fend them off. Sometimes, good events could turn into unfortunate events and the contrary was true as well. Opportunities usually came accompanied by danger.

Nine Continents Steps!

Qing Shui once again used the Nine Continents Steps. This was

the second time he was using it in the same day. The feeling of being able to do so was exhilarating. Considering the previous use, he was now 400,000 li away.

400,000 li... This would be the equivalent of circling five times around the Earth in his previous life (the equator is about 80,000 li). Now, in the world of the nine continents, it would only be a short percentage of the distance between each continent. This went to show how big the world of the nine continents was.

He would not longer need to feel scared of having anyone on his tail. Although he had not seen the legendary Moonlight Treasure Box and Shrinking Ruler but even something as powerful as the Nine Continent Boots would probably be considered a low level divine artifact.

Maybe, if the Nine Continent Boots were to level up and could be used over ten times daily, he might really be able to travel between continents with them. Just the thought of that alone made Qing Shui very agitated. The vast world of the nine continents, with countless dangers. There were not many people who could really travel the world of the nine continents freely. However, the time it would take for one to do so was really discouraging.

Even after he had used the Nine Continents Steps, he was not yet in the deep areas of this barren land. Therefore, Qing Shui flew at his maximum speed and the Fire Bird's high pitch shrill scared off the demonic beast groups in the area.

...

After half a month, he entered the deeper region of the barren land. In mid-air, Qing Shui looked down on the forests. The forests here were all extremely towering ancient woods and were very densely packed. From the air, he could only see the top of the trees and some slight gaps between tree leaves.

A resounding cry rang out from the distance. Qing Shui lifted his head to take a look but did not hide. This was the fifteenth time he had come across a group of demonic beasts. He was already numb to them.

Taking out the Soulshake Bell!

Qing Shui felt that there was no need for him to hide the moment he came across that. He felt that there was a need for him to train himself and to collect items. The demonic beasts drew close. This was a flock of about 100 Twin-Headed Eagles. They were each about 30 meters in size and were around Grade Eight Martial Saints.

If it was in the past, Qing Shui would immediately land and seek shelter or hide in his Realm of the Violet Jade Immortal. However, right now, he did not try to hide. Riding on the Fire Bird, he dashed over at full speed. This was also the strongest group of demonic beasts Qing Shui had encountered after entering the place.

The abilities of the Twin-Headed Eagles were not high enough to deal any damage to Qing Shui. There were not many of them,

which was why he chose to fight them head-on!

The attacks of the Twin-Headed Eagles had a hint of poison in them, primarily on their beaks and claws. When used against opponents of the same level, the poison's effects were quite good.

Soulshake Bell!

With such a large number of them, Qing Shui did not go easy on them. He quickly shook the Soulshake Bell, stopping only after the spiritual energy in the Soulshake Bell was all used up.

Three of them died, over twenty of them escaped and over ten of them attacked each other. Qing Shui took out the Violet Gold Divine Shield and the Big Dipper Sword, charging in.

Shield attack!

Sword of Sixth Wave!

Qing Shui was like a tiger descending from the mountain, defeating this group of demonic beasts which were about a hundred in number. After all, the difference in their abilities was quite high and he did not face much pressure when dealing with them.

When one was at his level, others would not be able to defeat him with numbers alone. He went to collect some of the hide, Cores and others parts of the Twin-Headed Eagles. They were still high

level Martial Saint beasts and these were precious resources.

He went on his way but did not encounter anyone on the way. He might have missed them when he used the Nine Continents Steps or other people had travelled on the ground. Usually, the time merchants required to travel from Central Continent to Eastern Victory Divine Continent was hard to estimate. Those who were able to travel from Central Continent to Eastern Victory Divine Continent on land, would usually be using “Silver Gale Beast” to pull their carriages.

The Silver Gale Beasts were Martial King level demonic beasts of slightly over ten meters in length. Their speed was very fast and they were also very strong. Compared to ordinary Gale Beasts, their level of endurance were also very high. Therefore, when merchants travelled the journey by land, they would all choose Silver Gale Beasts. Some martial arts cultivators may also choose to travel the journey with powerful land type demonic beasts.

Many powerful experts either had no flying demonic beasts or had only low leveled ones which were not powerful enough. Therefore, they could only travel on land. Martial Saints could only fly for a short amount of time, such as when fighting. They were not able to keep up with the energy expenditure of travelling while flying. Moreover, they could not match up with the speed and endurance of demonic beasts.

When he was free, he would look down to see if there were mercenary groups. It wasn't because he wanted to travel with them. This was what humans were like, just like how Qing Shui wanted to meet other humans. However, this did not mean that he

must travel with them.

The time in the Realm of the Violet Jade Immortal and the time in the actual world together meant that one day was the equivalent to 101 days for Qing Shui. Therefore it was very normal for Qing Shui to be like this.

When Qing Shui saw the faint appearance of mountains, he smiled. The spiritual energy here was already quite strong and the farther east he travelled, the stronger it was. He knew that he was arriving at the Eastern Victory Divine Continent. This mountain should be a natural barrier near the city which would keep some demonic beasts away.

Another reason which made Qing Shui feel that he had arrived at the Eastern Victory Divine Continent was because of the demonic beasts he had come across. At the very start, he had come across powerful demonic beasts which he had to run away from but the level of the demonic beasts were increasingly weaker toward to the end of the journey. Those which he had come across a short while ago were mostly just wild beasts. Qing Shui knew that close to cities, there were generally very few powerful demonic beasts.

The first city in Eastern Victory Divine Continent was one which was at the border. Therefore, Qing Shui decided to stay here for half a day or slightly longer. However, it would definitely not exceed three days.

Crossing the steep mountains, what came to his eyes was a quiet village. There were not many people here and there were a few stone huts scattered around the place. Over ten kids were chasing

each other and playing and there were groups of people busily bending their backs to tend to the terraced fields.

Qing Shui stood at the top of the mountain, looking off into the distance. He could see very far away and his vision could even reach the midpoint of the mountains. On the slopes at the back of the mountain, more than ten men walked over. They were either carrying or lifting some wild beasts' corpses, chatting happily as they headed to the village.

Qing Shui slowly descended from the mountains. The place reminded him of Qing Village, where the people would depend on what was nearby in nature for food. Other than the fact that this place was a little secluded, there was nothing bad about it.

The people here mainly ate meat. They were simple and straightforward people but they all appeared to be very valiant with great muscular physiques. Even though they didn't pick up any cultivation, they were all equipped with brute strength.

When Qing Shui came, he had used the Nine Continents Steps for the last time to keep away from the main road and thus passed by this place. If he had followed the widest path, which many people took, he would definitely be led into a city.

...

With the appearance of a young stranger, many people came out to take a look, their gazes on guard. Some of them were even carrying weapons.

“I got lost from a mercenary group and came by this place unknowingly. I mean no harm.” Although his words sounded useless, he felt that there was still a need for him to say them, at least to indicate his intent. As for whether they would believe him, it was something beyond his control.

“The village head is here!”

Just then, someone shouted out and everyone made way. An old man wearing plain clothes with a bent back walked over. The old man looked very weak and old, as if he was in his final years.

“Mister, I hope that you’re not offended. We’re but people who have not seen the world before. If you don’t mind, you can come to this old man’s place and we’ll see if there’s anything we can help you with,” The old man smiled and said to Qing Shui.

“Sir, what are you talking about? The fault is on me for being so abrupt,” Qing Shui quickly smiled and said.

The old man sent the crowd off and headed for a stone house at the midpoint of the mountain. The meandering mountain path was long but not steep. Although the old man appeared to look very old and weak, his steps were very stable.

“Sir, what place is this?” Qing Shui smiled and asked as he walked.

“This is a small village near Bole Country’s Tigerfang City, called the Jade Mountain Village. Legends have it that very long ago, the mountains here were all made of jade,” the old man smiled and said.

As expected of one who had lived for so many years, the moment Qing Shui asked, he knew the answer Qing Shui wanted. Therefore, his reply was very detailed.

“Sir, have you always been in this Jade Mountain Village?” Looking at the great scenery, it wouldn’t be an exaggeration to even call this a paradise.

“I’ve gone out when I was young but the furthest I went was only to Tigerfang City. However, it’s hard for a person without abilities to survive outside. The brute strength I was so proud off was too weak in comparison to the cultivators and thus I returned to this place. There’s mountains, fish and to be honest, it’s quite good,” the old man said, full of emotion.

Earlier, Qing Shui had seen that there were at least ten villages in the area but they were just slightly far apart from each other.

“It’s really good, with beautiful mountains and rivers. One only needs to be able to bear with the loneliness.” Qing Village stared at the surroundings. It was unlike Qing Village. Although Qing Village was also a village, it had a population of several tens of thousands. Moreover, there were many towns in the area and they would not feel lonely at all. However, this place was really too quiet.

AST 853 – Devil, A Promise Of Ten Years

“Most of the people in the village are middle-aged people, old people and children. The youngsters have all gone out. They can’t stand the loneliness here and said that they were going to learn abilities and explore the world.” The old man let out a sigh.

Every year, there would be a few people who would lose their lives hunting. If they could pick up some martial techniques, even if they were just simple ones, they would be able to reduce the number of deaths.

“This is troubling. I’m a cultivator and while I might not be as strong as some powerful experts out there, I’m still much stronger than ordinary people. If you don’t dislike the idea, I can teach them a set of martial techniques. As long as the person is willing to put in hard work, they could definitely excel. It’ll definitely be better than the martial techniques that they can acquire outside,” Qing Shui looked at the old man and said, smiling.

In one look, Qing Shui sensed that the old man was not weaker than other people. The old man was a Peak Houtian cultivator but it was just that he was in his final years.

To Qing Shui, Peak Houtian cultivators were really nothing much. He could even instantly kill Peak Martial Saints he was the same level with, let alone this Peak Houtian cultivator.

But in this village, a Peak Houtian cultivator was already the most powerful existence. This was also why he was the village

head.

The population here was sparse and with the old man's abilities as a Peak Houtian and his experience in judging people, he could of course tell that this young man was an "expert". If they were lucky, they might be able to change the fate of the entire village.

"Mister, are you really going to teach them martial techniques?" The old looked at Qing Shui in astonishment. He had not expected this to be so easy.

"Sir, you can go inform them, including the people from the nearby villages. Everyone can come, no matter their gender or age. I'll teach them for a day. As for how they turn out, it'll be dependent on their own fate. I'll also give all of you a surprise," Qing Shui said after giving it some thought. This was his first day in the Eastern Victory Divine Continent and he had made up his mind to do a good deed. It was said that doing so would make for smoother sailing in the future.

When he went to the Southern Viewing Continent, Qing Shui had saved Ye Guyan's younger sister. He had also done many of such things in the past but the belief that everything would be smooth-sailing after doing a good deed was not something that was absolute. Usually, he would just do it if he came across them. It was not important whether doing good deeds would accumulate good karma, what was most important was that the heart was good.

"Alright! I'll thank you then." The old man was very happy and even his hands were trembling.

By this time, they were already standing before the house!

“Grandfather!”

“Grandfather!”

A young male and female pair in their twenties walked over and called out to the old man happily. They then looked at Qing Shui, eyes filled with astonishment.

Qing Shui looked at them as well. The guy had a stocky and imposing build. He was not only handsome but also was very pleasing to the eyes, making one have a good impression of him. The girl was delicate and pretty, with a pair of big bright eyes. When she saw Qing Shui, a hint of flush appeared on her delicate face.

“Ao`er, go tell everyone in the area to head to the 玉山村’s square. Tell them that it’s something good and it’s up to them if they want to come or not,” the old man told the guy who had called him grandfather.

When Qing Shui looked at the guy, a hint of light flashed in his eyes. He had good potential but it was just that he had a slightly stronger pernicious aura. Qing Shui could not help but drift deep into thought.

“Qing Shui, the one earlier was my grandson, Chi Ao. This is my

granddaughter, Chi Feng,” the old man smiled and said.

“Hello Uncle!” The girl said shyly.

“Hello!”

A huge wave was churning in Qing Shui’s heart when he saw that both siblings had such a great pernicious aura. Qing Shui’s spiritual sense was quite strong now and he could sense some deeper things within the body, such as one’s pernicious aura.

“These two kids have led a tough life since young. Their birth parents were gone right after they were born,” the old man said, shaking his head.

“Grandfather, Feng`er has grandfather with me,” the girl tugged the old man’s sleeves and said.

Qing Shui smiled, not saying a word. He did not find it surprising since it was very normal for people with such a strong pernicious aura to have been through something like this. This pernicious aura was the [reincarnation of the devil](#). No one who was related to the person would come to a good end.

Used something of a similar implication for the translation. The raws actually stated one who was a reincarnation of the Tianshagu Star, a star that flickers between being very bright and very dark. The star is along the straight line between the fourth and seventh stars of the Big Dipper. It is said to be a sign of great misfortune and people whose life/fate were linked to this star were said to bring great misfortune to the people around them.

Although these were just rumors, sometimes, they were really unbelievable. Therefore, even if Qing Shui were to trust in these rumors, he would not do so completely. After all, how many people would truly believe what he had been through?

About an hour later, the guy returned, perspiring furiously. The moment he entered, he smiled and said, "I've informed everyone. Some of them are at the square already."

"Then let's head over. We don't have much time," Qing Shui suggested.

"Alright, then we'll have to trouble you," the old man smiled and said happily. He was near the end of his life but he was still worried about the two children with him. They had good potential but it was just that no one could appreciate them, nor did they come across any opportunities. Having met Qing Shui this time, he decided to gamble on it.

"There's no need to stand on ceremony, I'm the one who's willing to do this. This place feels very familiar to me. I've also live for a very long period of time in a similar environment and have also seen many people hurt by wild beasts." Qing Shui shook his head. These were really his heartfelt words.

Very soon, the four of them arrived at the square.

玉山村's square was just a flat spacious space at the foot of the mountain. The place was higher in the middle and lower in all

other areas. When it rained, water would flow out in all directions, leaving not a single drop behind.

There were some stone chains, hammers and other things at the square and about 30 people were there, mostly children and middle-aged people. There were also a few who seemed to be in their twenties and more people were still gradually heading over.

When Qing Shui saw this place, he could not help but recall the square back in Qing Village. He had also spent a very long time there back then.

“I’ll demonstrate it once for everyone while we wait for other people to arrive.” Qing Shui said to the people in the square.

Then, not waiting for any reaction, he displayed the Tiger Form. He performed each stance slowly but the smooth flow and the strong power of his movements made them felt very excited.

Qing Shui performed it time and time again and many people were looking at it seriously, for fear of missing out on any of the steps. The other people who gradually came also joined in.

When it was about time, Qing Shui stopped and looked at the less than 100 people in the square. There were about twenty who were at Chi Ao’s age, with at most around 60 middle aged men, with the others being slightly older people.

After giving it some thought, Qing Shui said slowly, “Earlier, I

told the village head that I'll be giving you guys a small gift."

He took out the Tiger Vitality Pill and gave one to each of them. "If you can trust me, then take it. If not, then forget about it."

Some people were hesitant but Chi Ao and Chi Feng ate it immediately. Their actions caused the other people to not give it much thought and just took the pill.

After the time for one incense stick to burn passed...

"Mmm, I feel that I seem to have more strength," a brute middle-aged man said doubtfully.

"Old Liang is right. I have the same feeling too."

...

"To think that my strength has increased by so much..." Someone suddenly raised up a huge stone chain which he had never been able to lift before.

His action astonished many people. Everyone knew one another well and while the man was considered one with quite a high brute force, he would only be able to lift a 200 jin stone chain at most. However, he had now lifted one which was 600 jin and had done so with great ease since he was still talking.

“The medicinal pill you guys have just taken can permanently increase your strength by 1,000 jin. However, this is just the upper limit and since all of you have different physiques and absorb at different rate, you’ll be able to have your strength increased by 500 jin. Those whose physiques are better may get an increase of 900 jin,” Qing Shui smiled and said.

After he had finished talking, all of them broke into elated expressions. It felt exceptionally good to be able to have the feeling of instantaneously becoming stronger. Moreover, the Tiger Vitality Pill also had the slight effect of strengthening one’s bones and changing one’s physique.

They all tried it once and had by now, completely trusted Qing Shui. All of them looked at him in admiration, full of anticipation over the next surprise he was going to bring them.

“In a while, I’ll teach all of you the Tiger Form battle technique which I’ve displayed earlier. When it reaches a certain extent, you’ll be able to cultivate the Tiger Form Qi force. What level you’ll reach for this battle technique will be dependent on your efforts. If you’re willing to work hard for about ten years, there’ll definitely be people amongst you who can become Xiantian cultivators or even stronger. You’ll find out in the future,” Qing Shui said gradually. These words were intended to let them work hard in their training. Even if his martial arts were to be passed on, in the future, if he came across it, it would also be able to bring him a sense of satisfaction.

He then demonstrated and explained each move and stance to them in turn and got them to try them out. This session also let

Qing Shui see Chi Ao's and Chi Feng's astonishing talent. This was only astonishing to Qing Shui. The other people would definitely not be able to believe that this was their first time cultivation martial techniques. Everyone all thought that the two of them had practiced with Qing Shui earlier.

There was boundless potential within them and as Qing Shui watched them practicing the Tiger Form, his thoughts were churning at great speed.

“In the future, you guys must work hard in your training. If there's anything you're unsure of, you can ask them,” Qing Shui said while smiling and pointing to Chi Ao and Chi Feng.

These people all bowed respectfully to Qing Shui, calling him ‘Teacher’ before they left. They've all received something good from Qing Shui and it was very normal for them to be calling him that.

Chi Ao and Chi Feng also went back to train, leaving only Qing Shui and the old village head.

“Sir, do you hope for the two of them to become strong?” Qing Shui asked calmly.

The old man looked at Qing Shui very long before he then sighed and said, “The two of them were abandoned and back then, many people said that they were bad luck. The moment they were born, all of their kin died. They are a pair of twins and since I'm alone by myself, I brought them back with me. In the blink of an eye, 20

years has passed.”

“Then do you want them to stay here forever or to go out?” Qing Shui smiled and asked.

“I don’t have that many years to live. It might be fated for them to have met you this time around. It’s better to let them go!” The old man sighed and said.

“Alright, you can rest assured,” Qing Shui smiled and said.

Qing Shui and the old village head returned to the houses and found a place for Qing Shui to stay in.

Chi Ao and Chi Feng returned in the evening. When they saw Qing Shui, Chi Feng happily called out, “Uncle!”

“Uncle!” Chi Ao also greeted him.

The old village head left.

“Do the two of you want to become strong?”

“Yes!” Their tone sounded very sure and was also filled with a strong hope.

“It’s very tough for people who are strong.”

“We’re not afraid to work hard!”

“Then I’ll help you stimulate your potential, strengthening your foundations.”

In the time that followed, Qing Shui applied acupuncture on them and stimulated the pernicious aura in their bodies. It was a type of mysterious energy and was very powerful. As they grew stronger, so would this aura. Under such a pernicious aura, those who were not strong enough would be scared out their wits.

After stimulating their potential for about two hours, Qing Shui even used the Five Elements Fruit and other medicinal pills to help them strengthen their foundations.

“Work hard in your training in the future. I’ll leave medicinal pills behind. You can decide your own paths for yourselves. After ten years, if the two of you wish to follow me, then come look for me at Greencloud Continent’s Heavenly Palace!”

AST 854 – Spirit Channeling Jade, Liu-Li Pregnant

“In the future, when you cultivate, I will provide the medicinal pills. As for your cultivation path, you choose it yourself. Ten years later, if you still want to follow me, then come to the Heavenly Palace in Greencloud Continent to look for me!”

Qing Shui said after assisting Chi Ao and Chi Feng in awakening their potentials.

Before the two of them could say anything, Qing Shui continued, “Don’t say anything now, just do your best to practise the things I have taught you. Now, I will teach you two sets of fist techniques. Remember to practise.”

The Taichi Fist cultivated a tranquil heart and resolved the baleful aura in their bodies. This way, they would not be corrupted by it, turning into killing machines.

Earlier, he mentioned that they have to get strong, this was not simple to do at all. If they were able to reach such heights within ten years, to rely on that baleful aura in their bodies to reach that level, then Qing Shui would be able to push them to even further heights.

On this night, there were many people who did not rest. They stayed up the entire night to familiarize themselves with the Tiger Form and feel the strength in their bodies. They were so excited that they could not contain themselves. They even wanted to go

out to the mountains and fight with the mountain boars and tigers. At the moment, when their strength was increasing, especially the moment when they were practising the Tiger Form, they felt an unexplainable delight.

However, Qing Shui returned to his room, then entered the Realm of the Violet Jade Immortal.

While it was only a day for others, even if they did not eat or sleep, it was just 24 hours, it was different for Qing Shui. He had a lot of time. However, he cultivated too many things.

He had to accumulate experience for everything. Like refining medicine or breaking through in his techniques, it was the result of accumulating experience. The more he practised, the more familiar he would be. Only by continually practising and accumulating experience, could he discover the intricacies of the techniques and breakthrough to new realms.

When he came out of the Realm of the Violet Jade Immortal, it was already late at night. When Qing Shui came out of the room to the outside. He could see could see two figures dancing in the moonlight, practising the Tiger Form.

The village chief himself was not far off, overseeing Chi Ao and Chi Feng. Qing Shui slowly walked over. When the village chief saw Qing Shui, he said happily, “Why are you not resting sir?”

“I can’t sleep, so I came out to talk a walk. Why are you not resting?”

Qing Shui knew the reason but he still asked anyway. He knew that the village chief was worried about Chi Ao and Chi Feng. Although, they were not his grandchildren, after raising them for twenty-odd years, it was no different than if they were his own grandchildren.

“I could not sleep either. Hmm, I forgot something. Sir, please wait for me here for a bit.” The old village chief seemed to have suddenly thought of something.

Qing Shui nodded his head and agreed. He did not know why did the old village chief suddenly left.

After about ten breaths of time, he heard the sound of footsteps. When Qing Shui turned his head to look, he was stunned. He saw the village chief carrying a bluish-green jade that was about the size of an infant. The jade had a simple beauty to it, its color was not garish.

What a huge piece of jade!

Qing Shui was astonished but what he noticed later made him even more astonished. The appearance of this jade as well as the Spiritual Energy it gave off caused him to think of a particular item.

Spirit Channeling Jade!

“This was passed down by my ancestors. They obtained it long ago in jade mountain. It seems like something good. It’s a pity that we do not know what is it used for. When placed in a room, it will keep the room fresh and clean, making one’s mood feel especially good. I hope sir would not dislike this. There are no other better things here that I can repay sir with.” The old village chief handed the jade over to Qing Shui.

Qing Shui hesitated for a bit. He could tell that the village chief really wanted him to have it, Qing Shui himself wanted it too. However, he could not just take it for nothing. Thus, he did not say anything else and received it. After that, he immediately took out a Xiantian Golden Pellet. He did not want to owe the old man anything. That piece of jade was definitely not an ordinary item. He could feel it when he received it.

“Senior, this thing can allow you to strengthen your body. Eat it, I’ll help you adjust to it,” Qing Shui said as he threw the jade into the Realm of the Violet Jade Immortal.

The old man did not reject it and immediately swallowed that pretty medicinal pill. Everyone in Jade Mountain Village already knew how strong this youth’s pills were.

The old man sat crossed-legged there as Qing Shui used the Gold Needles to protect his pulse and important meridians, allowing the huge energy to circulate a cycle. Very soon, a layer of black filth was exuded from the old man’s body.

Xiantian cultivators had all experienced marrow cleansing. This was the difference between Xiantian and Houtian.

The old man opened his eyes and stared at Qing Shui dumbfoundedly. When he noticed the stink on his body, he quickly apologized and went to take a shower. With his peak Houtian cultivation, he knew what was going on. Furthermore, now, he was a Xiantian cultivator.

In the past, becoming a Xiantian was just a wishful dream from him. Now, he actually had broken through to Xiantian.

Very soon, the old man changed his set of clothes. His previously old and fragile figure seemed to have turned slightly younger. There was now a glow on his face and a look of satisfaction in his eyes.

“Sir has given this old man too much. You have helped me achieved the biggest dream I had when I was young,” the old village chief said gratefully.

“You have already became a Xiantian cultivator. You should be able to see the talent that Chi Ao and Chi Feng have. I have a few things here that I want you to give to them in future. I am going to leave now.” Qing Shui handed over many beast parchments to the old man.

“You are leaving now?” The old man said bewilderedly.

“Mn. Yes, I’m leaving. You will guide the people here in their cultivation. Remember to remind them to not antagonize the strong Demonic Beasts. It is no problem if a group of people

working together deal with a wild beast. Do not be greedy. I believe that you will be able to help them to understand.” Qing Shui smiled at the old man.

“Don’t worry, the people in this mountain village are the best at being satisfied with what they have.”

“Please say goodbye to them on my behalf. If I have the opportunity to in the future, I will come here again.” Qing Shui waved his hands as he floated into the air. Suddenly a huge fiery red bird appeared in mid-air.

Qing Shui got onto the Fire Bird. The huge red wings flapped and disappeared from their view very soon.

“That’s Uncle!”

“Uncle left!”

“Teacher left!”

.....

Qing Shui held a huge piece of jade in his hands. It looked like a huge symbol of power and good fortune. In his memories, the Spirit Channeling Jade had a very great origin. It was a piece of five colored divine stone that was left behind after Nuwa repaired the heavens. After that, an incredibly strong divine monkey was born from it.....

Qing Shui did not know if the piece of jade in his arms was similar but it was not like that five colored divine stone. It did not have five colors.....

He looked at it with the Heavenly Vision Technique while he felt a complicated emotion.

Spirit Channeling Jade!

It was a famous and precious jade. It was the Jade Heart of the huge Jade Mountain. It had some miraculous powers. It could increase ten percent of his overall speed. It currently was only in its first grade, that was its basic level of power.

Qing Shui remembered that the Spirit Channeling Jade can gain experience and level up. Its effect was to raise his overall speed. It was similar to the effect he saw but even stronger.

Increasing his overall speed, that should refered to his Demonic Beast's speed, medicinal herbs and all his other supplementary techniques.....

At this moment, Qing Shui did not know what to say, he had just obtained the Spirit Gathering Lamp not too long ago. Now, he actually obtained the Spirit Channeling Jade.

“Jade Mountain Village.....”

Qing Shui suddenly thought about when the old village chief mentioned that this used to be a very famous jade mountain. He said that they obtained it from the Jade Mountain and this Spirit Channeling Jade was its Jade Heart. Could all this be true?

However, the jade mountain now looked like a stone mountain. Could it be because the Jade Heart was gone?

The Jade Heart was the foundation of the jade mountain. Around the Jade Heart were Jade Marrows and Jade Essence. There was no need to mention the preciousness of Gold Essence, Jade Essence was similar. The Jade Marrow was more precious than Jade Essence. As for the Jade Heart, it was even more so.

Looking at the Spirit Channeling Jade, its state was very good. When he held it in his hands, it felt like it weighed hundreds of pounds. As a peak Houtian cultivator, it was natural that he was able to move it around.

In his memories, these magic treasures were split into Grade One Magic Treasures, Grade Two Magic Treasures and Grade Three Magic Treasures. Although it was not necessary that a Grade Three Magic Treasure would be stronger than a Grade One Magic Treasure, the Grade Three Magic Treasure would normally have more abilities. Of course, the effect would be stronger as well. The abilities of a Grade One Magic Treasure was more restrictive too. Like the Soulshake bell can only be used against Demonic Beasts and the Spirit Gathering Lamp increased the damage of Demonic Beast's skills.

However, in the World of the Nine Continents, all of these might

be different. Furthermore, these Magic Treasures were not differentiated by Grades. Only by level and the abilities that it carried.

The Spirit Channeling Jade has a strong Spiritual Energy, perhaps that is why it could have such an effect, Qing Shui thought before he tempered it once then threw it into the Realm of the Violet Jade Immortal. Since he tempered it once outside, he would not be able to temper it inside the Realm of the Violet Jade Immortal for one day.

A treasure like the Spirit Channeling Jade was of immeasurable value to Qing Shui. With the Realm of the Violet Jade Immortal, Qing Shui would be able to save a lot of time. It could help Qing Shui and his Demonic Beasts to raise their speed. When its level is increased, its effects will be even greater.

Nine Continents Steps Effect!

The second day Qing Shui arrived here, he had already used the Nine Continents Steps Effect once. He would keep his one remaining opportunity to use it at night. In case he ran into any danger, he could use it to save his life.

After flying for two hours, Qing Shui went into the Realm of the Violet Jade Immortal for two hours before continuing on his journey. By the time it was morning, he could already see the figure of the city.

With another Nine Continents Steps Effect, he should arrive at

the outskirts.

He felt the abundant Spiritual Qi of Eastern Victory Divine Continent. The Spiritual Qi of Eastern Victory Divine Continent was much higher than that of other continents. One of the characteristics of this continent was that the vegetation here was particularly dense.

Qing Shui did not stop. His target was in the east. The more he headed to the east, the more abundant the Spiritual Qi was. The powers in the east were also stronger because the Spiritual Qi was more abundant. It was more suitable for cultivation, thus, the strong powers gathered in the east.

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Greencloud Continent, Heavenly Palace, Qing Clan.

“Liu-Li, you must be satisfied now. You are about to become a mother.” Canghai Mingyue looked at Huoyun Liu-Li, who already had a small bump on her belly.

“This rascal left for so long and has not returned yet,” Huoyun Liu-li Said happily, her pretty face had an additional elegance to it.

Right now, she was being very careful. It had taken a long time for her to get pregnant, causing her to feel that it was very

precious. This was the child of her and Qing Shui. She wanted to see her child being born soon.

“He does this often, you don’t have to worry about him. The number of people who are able to hurt him are few. I only worry that he went to the Central Continent or somewhere further,” Canghai Mingyue said calmly.

“Mother!”

The two young fellows ran in. In half a year’s time, these two young children had changed greatly. After a while, another two young fellows came in—Qing Ming and Qing Yan.

The four little fellows were as exquisite as porcelaine dolls. They were incomparably pretty.

“Elder Sister, Look at how pretty these few fellows are. I’m afraid that I will give birth to an ugly child.”

AST 855 – Golden Buddha Temple, Heart As Clear As A Mirror, Surpassing Epiphany

“Sister, look at how beautiful these few little fellows are. I’m afraid that I’ll have an ugly baby.”

Huoyun Liu-Li laughed, mostly joking about it.

“Our Liu-Li is such a beauty, how would you have ugly baby?” Canghai Mingyue teased her from one side.

“Even if the baby is ugly, it’s still my child. If he dares to hate it, I’ll make him pay,” Huoyun Liu-Li laughed too after finishing her sentence.

“Aunty is so beautiful!” Qing Yin stood on her tiptoes and told Huoyun Liu-Li.

Huoyun Liu-Li bent down to scoop Qing Yin up. “Little lass has such a sweet mouth, unlike that big meanie at all.”

“That big meanie?” The little lass stared at Huoyun Liu-Li in curiosity.

“I’m talking about Qing Shui. Remember, Qing Shui is a big meanie,” Huoyun Liu-Li said cheerfully.

“Oh, Daddy is a big meanie,” Qing Yin’s voice was a little

unconvinced as she stared at Huoyun Liu-Li.

Canghai Mingyue stood at one side speechlessly before quickly taking Qing Yin back into her arms. “Lass, don’t listen to your Aunty. Your Daddy treats you best. He’s not a meanie.”

“Sister, I was just teasing the child!” Huoyun Liu-Li chuckled.

“Children are gullible. If they start calling Qing Shui as Big Meanie.....”

Huoyun Liu-Li laughed. “Alright, alright. I’m not going to teach her that. But I’m very curious to see what would happen. Qing Shui would definitely blow his top.”

The Qing Clan basically didn’t go out. The only time they went out was for cultivation. Over the past half a year, their cultivations had been growing rapidly and steadily, especially the third generation and Luan Luan.

Qing Qing had also been improving very fast. Her Four-eared Macaque had also surprised everyone. Although it didn’t really increase in size, its strength had been increasing like crazy everyday.

The most tragic one would be Huoyun Liu-Li’s Golden Jade Rabbit. It was small in size and very gorgeous-looking. The few children had been pestering her to see it most of the time.....

Qing Shui didn't really know everything that was going on in the Qing Clan, especially about Huoyun Liu-Li's pregnancy. If he knew, he would definitely be exhilarated because he knew Huoyun Liu-Li wanted a child of her own very much.

He had arrived at a city called the Golden Light City by now. He had stopped over here because there were many 'Buddhas' here.

He didn't know why, he seemed to be very fated with 'Buddha'. Not only that, he kept feeling that Buddha and bald heads were inseparable....

The Golden Light City was a city located in the middle of the Eastern Victory Divine Continent, slightly closer to the eastern part. The city was especially flourishing. Legend had it that people who passed here would receive Buddha's blessings, so this place became a bustling city. This city was also more famous in the entire Eastern Victory Divine Continent.

Qing Shui remembered about the unnamed divine cultivation art that he had once gotten and there was a monk in it. Then also the Nine Waves Great Golden Buddha Palm and the Thousand Buddha Palm Imprint that he had been cultivating. Other than that, an enormous Buddha image had appeared a few times during Qing Shui's life and it seemed like he was the only one who could see it.

He was at the heart of the Golden Light City. Two or three monks dressed in kasaya robes were seen on the big streets from time to time and some of them had a staff in their hands. The most important figures in the Golden Light City were monks.

The Golden Buddha Temple! The most distinctive existence in the Golden Light City.

Qing Shui had only heard some rumors after he came here. The Golden Buddha Temple was said to be a branch of one of the Buddha Sects in the Central Continent. The members of the Golden Buddha Temple possessed powerful abilities and were definitely the most powerful in this Golden Light City.

The place that Qing Shui was heading towards now was the Golden Light Temple!

The Golden Light Temple was situated at the summit of the Jinluo Mountain. The Jinluo mountain was the biggest mountain range in the Golden Light City. Besides, many people visited the Golden Buddha Temple everyday. Most of them went for the sake of getting some Buddha aura on them.

They went there to offer a stick of incense and also make some donations to the temple.

It was almost noon by the time Qing Shui arrived at the Jinluo Mountain. The enormous mountain summit shimmered in gold under the sunlight, creating an illusion of a golden mountain to people.

He looked at the flight of stone steps that was about ten metres wide and winded upwards. Each stone step was less than one foot high. But every flight of stone steps led up to about five or six

metres before the next one.

Looking around, he saw many people were making their way towards the Golden Buddha Temple. These stone steps were very safe, even for ordinary people to climb and incidents of loose stone steps would definitely not happen. The ‘Buddha Nature’ was evident even in just the stone steps. It seemed like there was a reason behind the reverence of many people.

“Big Brother, you are also going to make a wish?”

Qing Shui looked towards the source of the voice and saw a tall youth asking a slightly shorter man.

The two of them weren’t really good-looking and Qing Shui also couldn’t sense any martial techniques on them.

“Oh, seems like you are also going to?” The shorter man appeared to be a little older than the taller man.

“That’s right. I really have no other choices so I can only come to make a wish. I heard that the Buddha Light Temple is very effective and the magic power of the Great Master here is boundlessly powerful,” the taller man said helplessly yet hopefully.

“According to other people, this Buddha Light Temple will distribute some ‘Divine Water’ to people who make a wish. It is said that this ‘Divine Water’ is especially effective,” the shorter

man added. He seemed to have come for that ‘Divine Water’.

The stone steps stretched on very long and very high. It could be considered a major engineering project. Qing Shui followed the the crowd as he made his way slowly towards the summit.

He been walking for more than two hours and there didn’t seem to be anyone dashing or even running because such actions were said to be disrespectful to ‘Buddha’. Besides, it also put one’s mental state and perseverance to the test.

For cultivators, this was a test of patience. For non-cultivators, this was a test of perseverance.

Could this be considered as asking for direction?

The Buddha Light Temple on the mountain summit finally came into his view after turning about 18 corners on his way. Qing Shui was quite astounded the moment he laid his eyes on the Buddha Light Temple for the first time.

It was an enormous group of buildings, built with yellow colored stones that caused these buildings to emit faint golden light.

There were many houses built from these yellow colored stones on the way but definitely none of them emitted such radiance. Besides, the sun was not around now so this was not reflected light.

“This Buddha Light Temple doesn’t look so simple.” Qing Shui thought inwardly, while he entered the main hall of this Buddha Light Temple, along with the others.

This was the hall that was open to public. It had about the same size as the main hall of the Cloud Adventurer Guild but there were more pillars here.

Golden Buddha Hall!

That was the name of this main hall. The first things that entered his field of view were the many Buddha statues and crowds. All of the Buddha statues were golden in color and each of them were about the same size. The biggest Buddha statue was the one facing the entrance of the main hall. It had a height of twenty metres while the rest were a lot smaller than it, with a height of only three metres.

There were a few praying cushions in front of each Buddha statue. Many would step forward to kneel and worship. There were also some people dressed in kasaya robes sitting cross-legged somewhere slightly further away in the big hall. In front of them were many people who wanted to have a discussion with them after worshipping the Buddhas. Most of them would receive some fruit or ‘Divine Water’ from those monks and then leave happily.

Qing Shui observed that the monks sitting there were usually quite old in age.

Many people stood in front of that enormous Buddha statue,

perhaps because of its enormous size, it slightly reminded Qing Shui of the Vajra's Glare that he was so familiar to.

Vajra's Glare?

Qing Shui suddenly gained some kind of understanding when he saw that enormous Buddha statue. Or perhaps he should say that it felt like some kind of enlightenment. He stood there dazed, neither making a move nor kneeling.

At this very moment, Qing Shui felt as if he was bathed by sunlight. Every bone in his body, his spiritual sense and his entire body felt indescribably refreshed.

Just at this moment, Qing Shui realized that the Buddha image behind him had emerged once again. He also realized that this Buddha image was very similar to the Buddha statue in front of him, especially the facial features.

Glare!

Vajra!

Qing Shui's heart was as clear as a mirror right now. It was as if his entire body was undergoing some subtle changes. The 'Vajra's Glare' which hadn't been improving and he didn't even know how to cultivate either was continuously growing stronger. It was as if his entire body and bones were being refined tremendously.

It wasn't an epiphany. It was something more than that.

The people around him came and went. Some were giving him weird stares. They were looking at this motionless young man that had a serene look on his face. No one saw the enormous Buddha image behind him.

There was a very special Buddha Statue at the deepest part of the big hall on the right side. It was as tall as an ordinary person and was also the smallest statue here. An old man was sitting cross-legged in front of this Buddha statue. He was an emaciated old man with long eyebrows, dressed in a robe which was a little too loose on him. Right at this very moment, the old man was staring at Qing Shui in amazement from afar. A dark red mark akin to a birthmark oddly appeared above and in between his eyes and it was glowing faintly.

The Buddhist's Third Eye, rumored to be able see through all disguises and terrify opponents to their very soul. This could also be considered a type of spiritual attack. It lowered the opponent's will to fight, losing the desire to continue fighting and thus lowering their strength. It could even damage the opponent's 'soul', sinking them into derangement and imbecility... An ultimate Buddhist Eye could instantly frighten the weak out of their wits.

The old man rose up slowly and then walked towards Qing Shui with a look of disbelief. He walked very slowly and stopped about twenty metres away from Qing Shui. Then he just continued staring at him.

In about 15 minutes, Qing Shui appeared to have woken up from a deep slumber. He had an extremely marvelled look on his face. It was his first time experiencing an epiphany before Buddha, the first time his heart was as clear as a mirror and the first time he felt enlightenment that had caused a transformation within his body.

One fold!

Qing Shui's strength was instantly doubled. Not only that, Vajra's Glare had definitely levelled up too. But Qing Shui didn't even have any intention to check up on it right now.

His physical strength of 5,000 countries in offense had now turned to one star. His defense had also reached 16,000 countries. His spirit energy that had previously been increased tremendously had once again greatly risen.

He was really lucky this time. It was almost unbelievable to him that his strength would be raised this way. On top of that, it was an immense increase. This made Qing Shui feel so unreal. He turned around to look at the Buddha image that was slowly fading away.

He sensed once again. After confirming that everything was real, he clasped his palms together and bowed deeply towards the Buddha statue. At this moment, that old monk with long eyebrows started walking again to Qing Shui's side.

“Hello, little almsgiver!”

“Hello, Great Master!” Qing Shui had found great pleasure in seeing monks, so he was extremely happy to meet one right now. He was indeed very fated with ‘Buddha’.

“Do you mind moving elsewhere to talk? This place is a little unsuitable.” The old man looked at Qing Shui with a smile.

“Please lead the way, Great Master!” Qing Shui said after hesitating for a moment.

AST 856 – Buddha In One's Heart, Buddha's True Eyes

Qing Shui followed the elderly man who was clad in monk robes. They went through the main hall and into the inner hall. With his increased strength, Qing Shui was not afraid of any sort of danger since he knew he could defend himself.

Perhaps the elderly man understood this, so when they entered the inner hall, he stopped and turned to Qing Shui, “ You have an affinity with Buddha, so you don't have to worry.”

When he heard this, Qing Shui smiled. This reminded him of the scenes from movies in his previous life when the hero saved the earth. However, he did actually feel like he had an affinity with Buddha.

“Why?” Qing Shui wanted to know the elderly man's thoughts. He could sense that the old monk was very powerful. If he hadn't received enlightenment earlier, he would've never be able to defend against this man. However, as his strength had increased by a fold, he could do so easily now. This strength he received from his enlightenment did not require any time or effort for him to get used to. He could instantly control it perfectly.

“You have the Nine Yang Buddha Body, which only appears every ten thousand years. You are blessed by Buddha. You might not believe me, but did you experience a sort of nirvana just now?” the old monk asked earnestly.

“I did. I thought that it was just a coincidence that I felt enlightened. Is that the meaning of having an affinity with Buddha? I guess that must be quite common.” Qing Shui did not ask any further about the Nine Yang Buddha Body. It was quite obvious that he had that body constitution.

“I looked for you today because I wanted to discuss something with you,” the old monk looked at Qing Shui.

“I am not interested in becoming a monk,” Qing Shui said softly.

“We don’t need you to be a monk. We just need you to register your name here at the Golden Buddha Temple. We would be very grateful to you,” the old monk quickly replied.

“I would like to know some basic information about your temple,” Qing Shui said after he thought about it. After all, he had obtained a great benefit from this place, so he did not mind registering his name here. Besides, he was not familiar with anyone in the Eastern Victory Divine Continent. It was just that he did not want to be restrained by anything if he did register this name with the temple.

“I am an ascetic monk of the Golden Buddha Temple. There are many like me here. The Golden Buddha Temple was once a branch of the Central Continent Buddha Sect. However, even though it was a branch, there wasn’t really a true connection. It was more a tacit agreement. This not only applied to the Golden Buddha Temple and the Buddha Sect. There are other branches that exist in a similar manner after being abandoned by the Buddha Sect.” the old man explained calmly.

“So how many branches does the Buddha Sect have now?” Qing Shui remembered that there were nine sects: Buddha Sect, Joyous Meditation Sect, Diamond Sect...

“Just as before, they have nine sects. But now, they are all in the Central Continent. The other temples outside have already established themselves as independent sects. Regardless, these sects still borrow the influence of the Buddha Sect in the Central Continent.” the old monk shared openly.

The old monk’s frankness impressed Qing Shui. He looked at the man and asked, “If I registered my name, how would this help you?”

Qing Shui did not understand why this man had said so much to him. He was never going to be a monk so he did not see how this would benefit the organization.

“I have no idea, but I know that it is a rare opportunity to meet someone with the Nine Yang Buddha Body, so we don’t want to miss this chance. We don’t need you to do anything and we won’t restrict you with any of our rules even if you register with us,” the old monk understood that the young man did not wish for any obligations.

“If you agree to my request, I’ll bring you to see the Abbot,” the old man watched Qing Shui.

“Come in. No one will force you if you’re unwilling. We will not

put you at any disadvantage.” Just then, a resonant voice rang out that seemed to come from all directions. The voice sounded forceful and wise, yet incomparably kind.

Qing Shui looked at the old monk without giving much reaction, acting as if he had not heard that voice. He smiled and urged the old monk, “Old Elder, please lead the way!”

They walked through the inner hall which was filled with many Buddha statues. However, these statues were about human-sized and there were fewer of them than outside.

After they passed through the inner hall, they arrived at a smaller shrine that was within the hall itself.

“Please enter, I will wait here. The abbot is waiting inside.”

Qing Shui exchanged a few pleasantries and entered the shrine.

Qing Shui could not feel calm as he could sense that the abbot was a very powerful man, so powerful that he was unable to gauge his exact strength.

When he entered the shrine, he saw another Buddha statue similar to but smaller than the one facing the entrance.

There was a prayer mat in front of the statue, upon which an old man was kneeling. He was facing away from Qing Shui and his white hair was so long that it reached the floor. Even if he was

standing, it would probably go past his waist. He wore a white kasaya and was extremely thin.

“Sit!” the kind voice spoke as the old man turned slowly.

With his gaunt face, the old man looked emaciated. Somehow, he looked very kind. He had a rosy glow and his very long white eyebrows drooped to his chest.

“Thank you, Abbot.” Qing Shui replied as he sat down on his knees on the praying mat three meters away.

“Young sir, do you believe that Buddha exists?” the abbot asked in his kind world-weary voice.

“I do!”

“Then, do you know where Buddha is?”

“Buddha is in my heart!”

“What a brilliant reply. As expected from someone with the Nine Yang Buddha Body.” The old man seemed exceptionally happy.

“Nine Yang Buddha Body?”

Qing Shui could recall the many Buddha-related experiences he

had. Since he was in a temple, it was good to believe in Buddha. Having a religion wasn't necessarily something bad, and it didn't really have much of an impact on him whether he believed or not.

“Actually you don't have the Nine Yang Buddha Body, or rather there is no such thing in this world. Rather, you have a special rare body constitution with an extremely Yang nature, perhaps due to the techniques you practice. This state is also known as Nine Yang and it is very powerful...” the old man explained succinctly. This made it easy for Qing Shui to understand and accept his words.

“This is just as I thought.” Qing Shui smiled, replying.

“You are one of the most considerably intelligent people that I've met in my lifetime. Unfortunately, although you have Buddha in your heart, you do not have the interest in that path.” The old man smiled faintly, not revealing his true feelings.

Qing Shui was quite surprised that the old man knew, but he was relieved. The old man's wise eyes seemed capable of boring into one's mind. Since he had revealed some things about himself, the old man must have noticed based on his extensive experience.

“You have seen through me.”

The old man shook his head, smiling, “Let's just talk today. Don't worry. You don't have to register your name here. As long as you have Buddha in your heart, that's enough.”

Qing Shui was stunned. The old man's words were profound. Without any warning, he had stealthily created a situation which drew Qing Shui in. Qing Shui felt a little uncomfortable interacting with someone like that, but at least he didn't feel totally exposed.

"Since fate has made us meet each other, I will give you this. You might find it useful." The old man handed a piece of flyleaf to Qing Shui.

Qing Shui hesitated. He did not know what it was and he did not want to owe anything, so he did not reach for it.

"Take it. It's simply fate. You don't need to feel burdened." the old man smiled, seeming to see through Qing Shui.

"It doesn't seem right." Qing Shui felt a little embarrassed since he had received such a great benefit from the temple and now he was actually going to accept another gift.

"Take it. Be decisive. It is not a good thing to be too calculated," the old man said.

Qing Shui took it as it would make him look fake if he didn't do so at that point. "Thank you!" he said to the old man.

"You must be from somewhere foreign," the old man said casually.

"Yes!"

“So you need information.” the old man laughed.

Qing Shui nodded.

“I am aware of the goings-on in the Eastern Victory Divine Continent. Since we have this fated encounter, you can go ahead and ask me about anything. I will answer you if I can.” The old man was ever so kind and composed. His expression did not change much and he was almost as calm as a stone statue.

Qing Shui sensed that the old man understood him. The old man was offering him as much as he could. Even Qing Shui felt that this was the best approach.

Qing Shui scanned the paper and saw two words: Buddha’s Eyes!

Buddha’s Eyes!

Buddha’s True Eyes!

Qing Shui looked and quickly kept it in his Realm of the Violet Immortal. After that, he looked to the old man and asked, “Can I go to the Sky Penetrating Mountains now?”

The old man looked at Qing Shui and laughed, “Yes. But it would be best for you to bring a group of experts along with you. You might find yourself struggling otherwise. It is very dangerous

there, so do take care.”

Qing Shui chuckled. He agreed with the old man, but he did not know whether to laugh or cry at his suggestion about bringing other experts.

“There are many formidable top-tier clans and sects in the Eastern Victory Divine Continent. Abbot, can you name a few, so that I am prepared?” Qing Shui said after some thought.

“There are so many. I will give you a few names. With your current strength, these are the few that you should avoid offending.”

Qing Shui grinned, “Abbot, you are overestimating me.”

“The powerful groups start from here all the way to the east. They are the Sky Prison Sect, Godly Sword Clan, Tyrant Fist Sect, Poison Mountain Stockade, Silken Web Ridge, Dongfang Aristocrat Clan, Mu Clan...”

Qing Shui remembered these names in his heart. These were important for him in the Eastern Victory Divine Continent as he remembered the old man’s words.

“You can go, but bring a group of experts along with you.”

When Qing Shui thought of this, he knew that the old man chose his words carefully. He wondered if the old man meant to advise

him to get companions before venturing there.

“These sects and clans are all found in the most eastern city of Eastern Victory Divine Continent, the Eastern God Country. It is very close to the Sky Penetrating Mountains, so there are people who explore those mountains. You can go there and have a look.”

AST 857 – Eastern God Country, Dongfang Aristocrat Clan

Qing Shui left the place. Even though the old man from the Golden Buddha Temple didn't say anything and he did not leave any sort of promise, Qing Shui knew that he would help them if the circumstances were right, that is on the condition that they even required help.

He stood on his Fire Bird and flew towards the east at high speed. This unplanned incident at the Golden Buddha Temple was extremely significant, it could even be a turning point, since he felt that he was much closer to the seventh Layer of the Ancient Strengthening Technique after his breakthrough. He felt that his body had entered a new mysterious realm as he stepped closer to the seventh Layer.

It is rumored that one with the strength of ten stars could start sense the realm of Martial Emperor. But Qing Shui knew that it was very rare for someone to be able to do that with just ten stars of strength and understanding how powerful a Martial Emperor could be was just the tip of the iceberg.

Most importantly, he did not know how much strength one had to accumulate to become a Martial Emperor. He only knew that the numbers wouldn't be small and he did not know how the Grades in Martial Emperor were segregated in the World of the Nine Continents.

Qing Shui longed to reach the seventh Layer of the Ancient Strengthening Technique. It was a critical level of the Ancient

Strengthening Technique that allowed the user to move from intermediate to advanced grade. It should at least provide a x10 effect on his strength and that was only his conservative estimate. Even the transition from third to fourth layer, lower to intermediate, produced a greater than x10 effect.

Everytime, he went from the initial layer to the next, the qi in his dantian turned from gaseous to liquid which enabled him to gain a lot of strength and Qing Shui did not know how his strength would soar for the next transition, this made him look forward to reaching the seventh layer.

Vajra's Glare!

Qing Shui was now observing his Vajra's Glare which he rarely used. He could easily count the rare occasion which he used that because the effects were too insignificant at the moment or rather it was on a much lower level so it wasn't that useful to him. If he was successful, the effects will be great.

Vajra's Glare was a skill which required activation. It focused all of the strength throughout one's body on the eyes and shot it towards the opponent in a unique way. There was quite a high chance it would distract the opponent. The stronger the target was, the lower the chance of success.

He did not know what realm his Vajra's Glare was in but he knew that the success rate had risen by 10%. Despite the increase in success rate, the effect of the skill was still highly depended on the opponent's strength and spiritual energy. Qing Shui was still very happy since he was rather confident about his current level of

spiritual energy. He suddenly remembered the flyleaf with the words 'Buddha Eyes' on it, that was given to him. He immediately took it out and started reading.

Buddha Eyes, also called Buddha True Eyes, was an ability that allowed one to see through all illusions. The user could directly attack their opponent's 'soul' by channeling an attack through their eyes, thus causing an injury to their spiritual body. In serious cases, the opponent might even appear to lose their soul.

It was a sort of spiritual attack.

At this point, Qing Shui realized that this Buddha True Eyes seemed to be related to his Vajra's Glare despite their difference. Since the old man said that he was fated to learn this Buddha True Eyes, did that mean that the old man knew that he knew the Vajra's Glare?

After that, he reviewed the technique of the skill. He decided to try it out because he had some time, hoping that perhaps it would also speed up the progress of his Vajra's Glare.

Nine Continents Steps!

The further east he went, the more flying beasts and demonic beasts he saw. He even saw other cultivators riding their flying beasts. They were extremely fast and disappeared from sight quickly.

As he headed east, the concentration of spiritual qi in the atmosphere increased. Qing Shui could see the cities, mountains, forests, rivers, lakes and seas from his Fire Bird's back but he was not in the mood to explore.

He felt that his time was limited, so it wasn't the right time to explore now. His priority was to reach Eastern God Country, the landmark at the far east of the continent before Sky Penetrating Mountains.

When he thought about the Golden Buddha Temple, Qing Shui suddenly remembered the young fatty that he met when he was buying herbs a long time ago. He brought the fatty back to the Qing residence, but one day a monk brought the man away saying that he had an affinity with Buddha...

He has an affinity with Buddha? He, himself was also told this. He wondered where the monk brought the fatty to and if the fatty had now become a powerful cultivator. Maybe, it was even possible to meet him again.

At Eastern God Country...

After three months, Qing Shui finally arrived at Eastern God Country. He decided to stay in a nearby city for about two days before heading to the capital city. The capital city of Eastern Victory Divine Continent was also the capital of Eastern God Country. This was nothing unusual since capital cities were commonly found in the best locations on the continent. As he was approaching a city and it was near noon, he decided to land and stay there for two days.

Dongfang City...

The city gave Qing Shui the impression that it was filled with history, though that might not be the case for others. The architecture in the city did indeed contribute to his impression of the place. Most of the buildings were at the north and faced south. The roofs were high in the centre and gradually sloped down two sides to allow for rain to run off and reduce accumulation of rain.

The roofs were made of durable yellow and red tiles. They were pleasant-looking; not lavish but still retained a sort of grandness. This was also the reason why Qing Shui chose this city for his short stay.

As noon approached, a faint aroma filled the streets, especially the one that Qing Shui was on, which was primarily occupied by restaurants and eateries.

There were simple setups of benches and tables along the street, as the small eatery owners started preparing various food items. They busied themselves, as they struggled to make a living, just to survive and have a better life.

“Fresh Scallion pancakes! Made from techniques handed down over the generations! Don’t miss your chance to try one!”

“Old Hu Mala Soup!”

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Qing Shui ears were filled with hawkers touting loudly, over and over again.

“Oh, this smells good!”

With Qing Shui's keen sense of smell, he immediately looked over in the direction where the aroma was coming from. It was not far and he walked over casually. It was a normal family owned stall which sold only scallion pancakes, a few side dishes and porridge.

The hawker was a woman who was about 30 years old. There were four children around the ages of three to eight. There were three boys and one girl. The girl was the youngest, she sat on a mat playing with two other slightly older boys. The boy who was about eight was scrubbing some bowls, helping the woman.

Qing Shui watched the woman and her children and began to think about his mother. Mothers are the greatest, they can and will go through any sort of suffering for their children.

The woman was very beautiful but coarse-looking clothes hid most of her elegance and there were tiny wrinkles on her face due to her overworking.

The woman seemed to notice that someone was staring, so she looked up and saw Qing Shui. She smiled, “Young sir, do you want to have your meal here?”

“I’m broke,” Qing Shui said softly.

“It’s just some home-cooked dishes. It’s okay. Everyone has their difficult times, it’ll be fine as long as you do something about it,” the woman smiled, speaking warmly. Qing Shui looked at the almost empty stall. There were so many customers elsewhere but there were only one or two customers here. Furthermore, the few people looked poor.

In a short time, a plate of side dish, a scallion pancake and a bowl of porridge was placed in front of him. They smelled good, it was this aroma that he had detected. He thanked the woman cheerfully and started eating.

Once he started eating, Qing Shui could tell that it tasted alright but it was normal— actually too normal. The contrast between the pleasant smell and the oddly normal taste made him feel uncomfortable. It might be better if it did not smell so good. The contrast annoyed him.

“Does it taste bad?” the woman asked when she noticed Qing Shui pausing after just one mouthful.

“No but it does not match its smell.” Qing Shui answered and continued eating.

The woman knew this but she had no choice. To feed her family, especially her children, she had to do this. She was unable to hold back a sigh.

“Sister, do you have a piece of paper and a brush?”

Qing Shui asked the woman.

“Yes! Yes!”

“Do you know how to read?” Qing Shui asked having he thought about it for a moment.

“A few words!” the woman replied.

Qing Shui waited for the woman to provide him the paper and brush. Thereafter, he started scribbling a few recipes for scallion pancakes, sides dishes, porridges, two desserts and some soups. They were dishes that did not cost much to make and he finished by leaving a sentence to ask the woman to burn the paper after reading. He then passed the paper to the woman.

“Since I got a free meal from you, I’ll give this to you. It might be useful to you.” He gave it to the woman and left.

The woman took it from him without much thought. She watched as Qing Shui disappeared from sight before she opened up the piece of paper. She was stunned when she saw the recipes. The ingredients couldn’t be any more normal but she sensed that the recipes were very valuable. She sighed looking at the direction that Qing Shui disappeared from. After that, she looked to the boy washing dishes and said, “Xuan’er, let’s go back early today. I’ll prepare something nice for all of you.”

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By this point, Qing Shui was already far away. He helped the woman because he wanted to help out a mother and the woman was also kind-hearted. The recipes that he gave her were just some standard fare which would allow her to make some pretty tasty dishes. They could not be compared to his nourishing soups. They would taste good enough for people to crave but not for people to be jealous. She could probably reach the level of a head chef. In the worst case scenario, she could be a head chef for others but that wouldn't be too bad anyway.

If the recipe he gave her was too good, it might harm her instead of benefiting her.

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After Qing Shui was full, he decided to walk around. He was previously in a normal residential area but he had now ventured to an area with luxurious residences.

“Today's the wedding of Dongfang Ye from the Dongfang Aristocrat Clan. They invited all family and friends of the family. We can go there to drink and eat all sorts of good food. Who would miss such an opportunity?” a middle-aged man commented shamelessly.

“Dong Yan, even though they mentioned that anyone above Xiantian can attend without an invitation, we just reached

Xiantian, isn't that a little embarrassing?" A man about 30 years old asked.

"Yes. Let's find someone like us. If there are more of us, it won't be so embarrassing," the man called Dong Yan laughed.

The younger man was speechless but Qing Shui approached them with a smile.

AST 858 – Attending The Banquet, dong Yan And Sun Yan

“Brothers, why don’t you count me in?” Qing Shui looked like a Xiantian cultivator and perhaps even a low grade Xiantian cultivator if he did not show his actual abilities.

Dong Yan and the considerably handsome 30 year-old looked at Qing Shui and laughed.

This laughter seemed to have brought them together, as if they were birds of a feather.

“I am Sun Yan!” the handsome man smiled.

“I am Dong Yan. It’s my pleasure to meet you!” the mild-mannered middle-aged man said smiling.

“I am Qing Shui. It’s my pleasure to meet both of you,” Qing Shui responded with a smile.

“Good. It is getting late, the banquet must be starting. Let’s not delay any further!” Dong Yan grinned at the two other men.

They got into a beast carriage and it sped quickly along the wide roads towards the Dongfang residence, as it swept pass the changing scenery.

“Brothers, is the Dongfang Aristocrat Clan very rich and powerful?” Qing Shui was unsure if this particular Dongfang Aristocrat Clan was the one mentioned by the old man at the Golden Buddha Temple. However, seeing that they were in Dongfang City, he reckoned that this particular clan must still be very powerful and influential.

“Dongfang Aristocrat Clan is the biggest clan in Dongfang City, I’m sure you can tell from its name. They are kind and charitable and the people here in Dongfang City only have praise for them. We are going to the wedding banquet of a talented member of their fourth generation, Dongfang Ye,” Dong Yan replied, smiling.

Qing Shui could tell from the man’s tone that the Dongfang Aristocrat Clan had quite a good reputation. However, to Qing Shui, everyone had a reason to be good or bad. The reason wasn’t important to him, even if their purpose was to boost their reputation, it was a good thing that they were being charitable.

People who deceived the public to gain reputation weren’t the worst. The worst were those who appeared to be charitable but instead donated to themselves. Such actions are detestable. They may appear to be open and aboveboard but they only care about their own benefits, even to the extent that they could boldly justify their actions by declaring that other people should not reap the benefits of their efforts. These people were worse than the former. In other words, this was the difference between a poseur and someone truly despicable.

Qing Shui did not condemn them. It was a fact that many large clans in the World of the Nine Continent would usually bring

benefits and advantages to the people around them. This was how their families established themselves in a particular city or country, gaining dominance in the region.

They reached the residence of the Dongfang Aristocrat Clan very quickly. It was a huge magnificent-looking manor which was located in a bustling district. Three of the men got down from the carriage and just when Qing Shui was about to pay, Dong Yan laughed, “How can we let you pay for the trip? Just wait and see.”

Dong Yan walked up to the lavishly decorated gates. A middle-aged man walked up to him and smiled saying, “Sir, are you here to attend the banquet?”

“Yes, yes. May I ask if you work here?” Dong Yan smiled at the middle-age man.

“Yes, I am in-charge of some miscellaneous tasks,” the man replied, still smiling.

“So you are the housekeeper? That’s fantastic. You see, I came here in a hurry so I forgot to bring any money. The ride here was a little expensive. I’d heard that Dongfang Aristocrat Clan is very generous, do you think...”

“Sure, sure.”

The man gestured to one of the guards. That guard immediately ran to the beast carriage and paid for the trip and even gestured

politely for the three men to enter.

Qing Shui was a little stunned by Dong Yan's antics. At that moment, many of the people who were entering and leaving the residence looked at the three men with contempt. Who would believe that these three men did not have the money to pay for their ride? Even though they were not well-dressed Xiantian cultivators not having enough money to pay for a carriage ride? What a joke...

Of course, there were people who found that little incident quite hilarious. With this, there were comments about Dongfang Aristocrat Clan's generosity and kindness. The housekeeper happily accepted these compliments on behalf of the clan.

Dong Yan did not show any hint of embarrassment, Sun Yan even held his head high, just like a proud cockerel... And, Qing Shui looked totally like an outsider...

The people around them seemed to be driven speechless by their behavior. Anyone would see them as a bunch of stingy people. They did not bring any congratulatory gifts, yet they even expected the Dongfang Aristocrat Clan to pay for their ride here. Who knows if they would need the family to pay for their trip back? If they did not have the money to come to this place, it was highly unlikely that they would have the money to go back...

"It is a disgrace to attend a banquet with such guests," a fat man sighed, shaking his head.

“That’s right. Why would these random people attend the banquet? I wonder if they have a invitation?” an ugly young man with a monkey-like face added.

“Invitation? Do you think Dongfang Aristocrat Clan would send an invitation to such people?” that fat man replied, once again casting a look of disgust at the three men.

“Brother Qing Shui, do you know what a pig is?” Dong Yan laughed while he walked. Everyone could clearly hear his words.

“This question is quite difficult, please enlighten me, Brother Dong,” Qing Shui asked, with a false look of seriousness on his face.

“Phish!” Just then, a young lady laughed when she heard Qing Shui’s reply. That bell-like laughter was like a breeze in spring.

Dong Yan contemplated for a moment, “Pigs are omnivorous mammals. They are heavy, their limbs are stubby, their movements are slow and they’re easy to rear but are stupid.”

With this, laughter erupted from the crowd. Everyone knew who he was talking about and they looked at the fat man. The fat man was wearing a large silk coat and was definitely heavier than 500 jin. The man flushed red with anger as he stared at Dong Yan, unable to say a word.

Dong Yan then looked at the monkey-faced young man. Looking

similarly as ugly, the monkey-faced young man quickly left the fat man once Dong Yan eyed him.

Qing Shui disliked such people who criticized others to display their superiority, that was the reason why he cooperated with Dong Yan to annoy that man. He could tell that they were rather successful when he saw that man's fuming face.

In the end, the man left with his tail between his legs.

Following the crowd, Qing Shui, Dong Yan and Sun Yan walked towards towards the manor. Just then, the beautiful young lady, who had laughed just some moments ago, approached them. "Uncle, that man is quite vengeful, you have to be careful."

"Young lady, thank you. We are just people of lowly status, he won't waste his time with us."

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The residence of Dongfang Aristocrat Clan was quite extravagant. After all, they were the largest clan in Dongfang City, so this was nothing unusual. All corners of the residence were dazzling and well-decorated. Once again, the family members of the clan welcomed their guests.

They saw a large area with tables and chairs, that was where the banquet was held. There were many people already seated. There tables were filled with wine and dishes but everyone was busy

talking.

Birds of a feather flock together, this was also how the people grouped themselves. The other purpose of the banquet was for the guests to network so banquets that are held by such large clans usually do not have empty seats.

“Look how lonely that fellow is, let’s go over and chat with him. See, nobody is willing to sit with him. How pitiful,” Dong Yan said, smiling.

Qing Shui laughed when he looked over. Dong Yan was actually referring to the same fat man they had angered. Oddly, the ugly skinny man was not with him.

As there were many people around, that comment did not go unnoticed. The fat man was so embarrassed that he even felt like dying. He almost wished that he could just dig a hole and hide himself in it. He wanted show-off by criticizing those men but he didn’t expect such a situation. He couldn’t even do anything against them. Nobody ever dares to cause any ruckus in Dongfong Aristocrat Clan’s residence but he would never forgive those men.

Everyone around them knew that they were the three men who did not pay for their carriage ride. Humans are like that, they all like to watch a good show. The crowd watched them finding the situation hilarious.

“This fat brother looked for a table without others because he is afraid that there won’t be enough food.” Dong Yan’s words almost

made the fat man faint.

“Come. I haven’t eaten since morning. Let’s start eating first. I don’t think the host will find fault with us.” Dong Yan passed Qing Shui and Sun Yan each a pair of chopsticks.

They sat at the end seats of the banquet table. Even though there were no rules about eating. It was a fact that the banquet had not officially started. Besides, the people here did not come to the banquet to eat. With their statuses, they could eat whatever they wanted.

Qing Shui took the chopsticks. He was clueless as to how to react with these two people. He only followed their funny antics because he could sense that these two people were not really Xiantian cultivators. Just like him, they were hiding their true strength. Unfortunately, he only knew that they were very powerful and was unable to tell their actual capabilities accurately, especially Dong Yan.

People who could hide their actual strength from Qing Shui were definitely not ordinary. Furthermore, they even dared act in such a manner in Dongfang Aristocrat Clan, with no concern of how others viewed them.

“I knew it was you, younger brother Dong Yan when I heard that there was someone who couldn’t pay for their carriage ride. Why didn’t you tell us first?” A gallant, strong laughter came from the distance.

“Dongfang Third Elder!”

“Dongfang Third Elder!”

“Hi everybody. Just take a seat, eat whatever and enjoy the food. We are all friends here!” the man spoke with a straightforward tone, greeting everyone, giving a friendly impression.

Dongfang Third Elder’s words stunned the other guests. He actually called the stingy man who didn’t even pay for his own ride his brother.

Who was this man?

Just then, not far from them, cold sweat appeared on the fat man’s forehead. He had ridiculed them just now, even though he did not say anything else after that. He could not believe that he even thought to seek revenge...

“This is my nephew’s wedding. Of course, I came.” Dong Yan stood giving a sheepish smile.

“Let’s go. Please sit over there. My big brother and second brother will come over shortly. You should help yourself with the drinks.” Dongfang Third Elder seemed very happy.

Qing Shui smiled, knowingly. Now everyone knew Dong Yan was no ordinary man. A person who Dongfang Third Elder acknowledged was definitely a somebody.

“I won’t go over now. Let’s meetup after the end of the banquet. I have some friends here,” Dong Yan said, smiling at Dongfang Third Elder.

AST 859 – Dong Clan Of The Capital City, sun Clan Of Yun City, Brothers ?

“Dong Yan, your friends are my friends. Everyone should come over!” Dongfang Third Elder said, smiling back at Dong Yan.

“Alright, alright. You don’t have to be so polite. We’ll just stay here,” Dong Yan laughed.

This time, Dongfang Third Elder did not insist further. He exchanged a few pleasantries with Qing Shui and nodded at Sun Yan before leaving. Even though those were superficial words, he still had to do it for his reputation.

“Bah! That old man really came at the wrong time. He spoiled the fun,” Dong Yan laughed looking at both Qing Shui and Sun Yan.

He did not lower the volume of his voice when saying this, so Dongfang Third Elder who had just left jerked for a moment but did not turn back. Instead, he continued walking while the others around them were stunned. Who was that man? As he even made fun of Dongfang Third Elder, the others could not help trying to guess his identity.

Next, the new couple appeared. Qing Shui looked at the Dongfang fourth generation member, he was clad in a black-colored knight attire as he held the hand of a woman in a white gown.

The man was suave and handsome, displaying the good genes that were passed down through a large clan. Similarly, the woman was very beautiful, even though her face was covered by a silver veil which only revealed her pair of bright eyes.

Qing Shui considered the status of Dongfang clan in Dongfang city and the fact that the man beside him had an established relationship with this clan. He could tell that the man's background was in no way inferior to the Dongfang Aristocrat Clan. He only thought that the man's strength was not ordinary; once he realized the man's status, he felt extremely happy.

“Big Brother Dong, you really know how to hide your identity, as expected from someone from the Dong Clan of the capital city.” Sun Yan flashed an awkward smile to Dong Yan.

“Sun Clan of Yun City.” Dong Yan smiled as he poured a cup of wine.

“Big Brother Dong, so you know,” Sun Yan smiled, looking a little embarrassed.

Thereafter, the two men turned to Qing Shui, looking at him as if to say, ‘Since you know our backgrounds, it's your turn now.’

“I am Qing Shui from the Greencloud Continent,” Qing Shui said softly.

“Wow, Greencloud Continent. We must be really have some fate.

We met even though you're from such a distant place. That's great!" Dong Yan's eyes brightened as he exclaimed happily.

"I am delighted to meet both of you," Qing Shui said smiling politely. It seemed quite beneficial to have some friends here, even if it was just to pass time.

The matter of fact was that Qing Shui rarely had any free time. Only idle men would feel bored. However, since he had plenty of time in his Realm of the Violet Jade Immortal, one day did not mean much to him. Other than spending some time in the morning practicing Taichi Fist, he spent most of his time traveling and getting to know some people.

He knew that though he was quite powerful now, he may be nothing in the eyes of some people. He remembered the grace and favors he had received from many people in the past, so he knew the importance of having friends. Unfortunately, he didn't usually go out to befriend people.

When he first saw Dong Yan and Sun Yan, he already wanted to befriend them. Even more so now, since they were reasonably powerful and their personalities fit with his values.

Qing Shui did not care about their backgrounds as that was not important to him. He was more concerned about how capable they were. Without any talents and capabilities, no matter how rich or influential a person was, they were just good-for-nothings.

"Haha! Great! Since we seem to hit off, let's be sworn brothers

from now on. We won't conduct any sort of symbolic ceremony but we will consider each other as brothers. Even if we have our disagreements in the future, I will still treat both of you as my brothers," Dong Yan laughed.

"Okay. We will be brothers. Dong Yan will be our elder brother. Qing Shui, you should be younger than me right, I am 35," Sun Yan laughed heartily.

"Nice to meet you, my two older brothers. Since we are brothers, may we be brothers for life," Qing Shui said happily.

Qing Shui was really delighted. This was the first time he felt this way. Even though they did not go through any sort of ceremony, he felt that their bonds were special. Just as the saying goes, birds of a feather flock together. Qing Shui had always known himself to be an easygoing person, it was fairly obvious that Dong Yan and Sun Yan were that way too.

"Come, even though we don't need a ceremony, I'll show my sincerity with this cup of wine. Once we drink our cups of wine, we will be brothers for life," Dong Yan, being the eldest brother raised his cup, announced earnestly.

Sun Yan and Qing Shui immediately followed suit. The three of them lifted their heads and downed the wine. Dong Yan rarely had a serious face, from the time Qing Shui first saw him to now, this was actually the first time he looked serious.

This time, no one dared to underestimate the three weird men.

They were definitely some special guests since Dongfang Third Elder acknowledged that man called Dong Yan. This was indeed the attitude that most of the people had towards them. Within the blink of an eye, their impression of these men changed from viewing them as stingy and poor commoners to respectable people of elevated statuses.

Having the thought that those people were a bunch of clowns now made them realize that they were the true clowns.

The head of the Dongfang Aristocrat Clan was an old man of the second generation. He addressed the crowd for a few moments after he came out and proceeded to raise a toast. He announced that it was his grandson's wedding and urged everyone to enjoy the food and drink.

During that process, many people went up, offering their gifts. This was a good chance to suck up to the clan and there was no way that the people here would miss this chance. Most of the people brought gifts but there were certainly a few who didn't.

People presented precious herbs, precious stones like jade and agate, sculptures...

"Wow, they actually brought heartgems. They are even black heartgems," a person suddenly exclaimed.

"Heartgems?" Qing Shui asked, puzzled. He recently obtained a Spirit Channeling Jade, also known as the Heart of Jade Mountain. He wondered if the black heartgem was also an item like that.

“Brother, the black heartgem he spoke about is just a high level gem. It is not a true heartgem. A genuine heartgem is way better than his,” Sun Yan said mildly. His voice wasn’t loud but many people still heard him.

“You are all freeloaders! What gives you the right to criticize others?”

The middle-age man who had presented the ‘heartgem’ turned to look at the three of them.

“Funny. See how he reacts once somebody points that out.” Dong Yan smiled gently.

Being in the middle of the conflict, the head of Dongfang Aristocrat Clan quickly stepped in to diffuse the situation, “Okay, okay. We kindly accept your gift. Thank you Brother Ling Hu. Brother Dong Yan is a friend of ours, that is why he is here to attend our banquet. Please don’t hold anything against him.”

“Brother Dongfang, you well know that these people are freeloaders. Who the hell are they anyone? What gives them the right to criticize my gifts. Ling Hu Clan isn’t large but we can’t let others bully us.”

The middle-aged man was visibly angry. Anyone caught in such a situation would also feel angry. Besides, Ling Hu Aristocrat Clan was also quite influential, they were not really inferior to the Dongfang Aristocrat Clan.

“Could you allow me to take a look at that heartgem of yours? Anyway, it is just a stone. If you don’t dare, then that proves my point.” Sun Yan smiled calmly, not showing any anger.

“I have nothing to hide! I sure would like to see how you would turn it into just a stone.”

The middle-aged man did not back down since he was in front of so many people. The people from Dongfang clan brought out the black heartgem, which was the size of a baby’s fist and presented it to Sun Yan.

The members of the Dongfang Clan were curious too. Even though, they did not believe that the Ling hu Clan would do something so preposterous, considering the advancement of the Ling Hu Clan over these few years, there were certainly some disagreements between both families.

This boiled down to the fact that the influence and power of Ling Hu Aristocratic Clan had risen over these few years, this would explain why they might do this. However, everything was just conjecture at this point because they hadn’t reached the situation where they would have a go at each other.

Sun Yan held the black heartgem. He channelled his strength to his palm and within a split second the heartgem was smashed into bits. It was now clear to everyone that only the exterior of the ‘heartgem’ looked the part, whereas its interior was merely stone...

This time, everyone was stunned. For a brief moment, everyone remained silent. All of them stared blankly at the remnants of a stone that was in Sun Yan held in his hand.

“Brother Dongfang, this...this... Please believe me, it’s not fake...”

“Fuck it! This is clearly a stone and you still want him to believe you?!” someone scolded out loudly.

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The middle-aged man could no longer make any more excuses. The facts were right in front of everyone so there was no use explaining. Sun Yan smiled to the man from Ling Hu Clan saying, “Even if you didn’t have a gift, there was no way the Dongfang Clan would have chased you out. But, bringing a stone to deceive them...Did you mean to show your disdain towards the Dongfang Clan by such a despicable act? Do you think the members of the Dongfang Aristocrat Clan are idiots?” Sun Yan said sternly, condemning the act.

Qing Shui now knew the true personalities of his two new friends and he could only be impressed by their methods of dealing with the matter at hand. They slowly revealed their hand, giving no leeway for the opponent to escape.

Even that member of the Dongfang Clan did not know what to say. He basically just stared at the middle-aged man.

“You must have done something!” The middle-aged man

retorted, looking at Sun Yan.

However, everyone just looked at him like he was an idiot because they've never heard something that absurd— no one could turn a genuine heartgem into plain stone.

In the end, he could no longer stand being there. He turned and bowed to the head of the Dongfang clan, “Brother Dongfang, you must believe me. I’ll leave for now.”

“What a shameless man! He still wants Dongfang Aristocrat Clan to believe him.”

“He dared to criticize others when he is the shameless one.”

“How could Ling Hu Aristocrat Clan do this? Dongfang Aristocrat Clan doesn’t even need your gift. Even if you don’t have something that good, you can just bring something. That would be better than bringing something fake.” More and more people started discussing even though not all members from the Ling Hu Clan had left.

“They should leave. If it was me, I would just kill myself on the spot.”

“I say, Ling Hu Aristocrat Clan is so rich, why would they be so stingy?”

.....

In the end, all the members from Ling Hu Clan left hurriedly.

“Thank you, brother. I’d never expect that the members from the Ling Hu Clan would actually do that. We did not expect people to bring gifts but we were definitely disappointed that people would actually try to deceive us like that,” the middle-aged head of the clan said to Sun Yan and the people around them.

“Dongfang Fourth Elder, you don’t have to feel this way, just let it be. They must have their reasons for presenting a fake item like that. After all, it is not like they’re poor, so perhaps they found it difficult not being able to bring something decent,” Sun yan sighed, shaking his head.

“Dongfang Fourth Elder, this is a gift from the three of us. We hope that you don’t resent it. We are poor, that’s true,” Sun Yan said without changing his expression as he brought out a small carved jade sculpture. The craftsmanship was incomparable, it was a sculpture of a couple, representing the couple’s perfect pairing.

“We wouldn’t. This is more important. We will thank you on the behalf of our Ye’er,” Dongfang Fourth Elder replied happily.

The banquet lasted into late afternoon and people started to bid their farewells.

Qing Shui, Dong Yan and Sun Yan also stood up and bid their farewells as Dongfang Third Elder and the others sent them off.

“Brother, please help us pay for the fare, we don’t have enough money...”

“This beast carriage belongs to Dongfang clan, the ride is free,” Dongfang Third Elder said with a grimace.

AST 860 – Sacred Land, Yu He Returns To Hundred Miles City

Qing Shui didn't say anything but when Sun Yan was holding that Heart of the Black Gem, he could sense that Sun Yan had purified and absorbed the spiritual energy. He had done so without batting an eye, causing that Heart of the Black Gem to become a rock without any value.

There were too many people in the world of the nine continents and many strange people as well. There were even people with Golden Bloodline and Violet Bloodline (also known as Violet Golden Bloodline). Moreover, weren't the things which happened to Qing Shui mysterious enough? Therefore, he could now easily accept any strange occurrence.

It might be a unique physique of Sun Yan's that allowed him to reach a cultivation level which Qing Shui couldn't sense despite being so young. However, Qing Shui could sense that Sun Yan's level was on par with his but wasn't as strong as Dong Yan.

However, if it was in a one-on-one battle, it would be hard to tell who the victor would be. After all, they each had their killing techniques. However, Qing Shui had the confidence to beat them since he had the Thunderous Beast and with the current prowess his primordial flames was at.

In terms of spirit energy, Qing Shui didn't dare to say that he was comparable to a Martial Emperor but there were not many from amongst the Martial Emperors that would be able to suppress him. As long as he was not suppressed mentally, then he would

have the ability to put up a fight. Such a suppression was a complete suppression. If they couldn't succeed in suppressing him, they would be the ones in danger.

“Let's head to the city!” After giving it some thought, Dong Yan said to Qing Shui and Sun Yan.

Qing Shui smiled and nodded. So did Sky Penetrating Mountains. Qing Shui's intention was to head to the city and then to find a way to get to the Sky Penetrating Mountains. Dong Yan was from Dong Clan but he was not that sure about Sun Yan.

“Come, get on. We can chat on the way.” Dong Yan called out his beast ride. It was a huge Golden Eyed Tiger Hawk Beast, a golden-eyed flying demonic beast with a tiger's head and a hawk's body.

The three of them leaped up and landed on the back of the Golden Eyed Tiger Hawk Beast, quickly flying toward the city.

“Second Brother, do you have a feud with Linghu Clan?” Dong Yan gave it some thought and asked.

“Eldest Brother can tell?” Sun Yan asked doubtfully.

What Sun Yan was asking was actually if Dong Yan could tell that he had absorbed the energy from the Heart of the Black Gem.

“I can sense it slightly but I can't be sure. If you were to deny it, I would believe that as well,” Dong Yan smiled and replied.

Qing Shui had not expected Dong Yan to raise the question he had wanted to ask. He smiled and looked at Sun Yan. “Seems like 3rd Brother could tell as well. Those who can tell are all extremely talented people. It seems that it’s the guiding from the Heavens that we can become brothers here today.” Sun Yan smiled, as if he was very happy.

“That’s right. Today is really a happy day, a very happy day,” Dong Yan smiled and said.

“Is Eldest Brother on very good terms with Dongfang Aristocrat Clan?” Qing Shui asked.

“Interests, it’s all about the interests. Dongfang Clan’s businesses need our Dong Clan to help cover them. We don’t have that much of a relationship, it’s just all about mutual interests,” Dong Yan smiled and said.

“The people from Linghu Clan bully the weak and fear the strong. I’ve seen Linghu Clan’s Young Master beating up the elderly and snatching women. The people from Dongfang Aristocrat Clan are no better, it’s just that they’ve done a good job of keeping up their facade. In reality, they are no better than Linghu Clan. Therefore, I wanted to let the grudge between the two clans become even stronger. It’d be even better if they could end up fighting,” Sun Yan smiled and said.

“Haha, I’m clear about what Dongfang Clan has been doing. It’s just as what second Brother has said, thus I don’t have a good

impression of them. Although it appears as if they treat me very well, they actually hate me a lot but just can't do anything about it." Dong Yan looked at them and smiled.

"That's right, 3rd Brother, why have you come all the way to the Eastern Victory Divine Continent alone from Greencloud Continent? You can tell us, no need to stand on ceremony with us." Dong Yan smiled and looked at Qing Shui.

"I'm here to look for Sky Penetrating Grass which is 5,000 Years or older," Qing Shui smiled and answered.

"Sky Penetrating Grass? That is is a rare treasure. Although Dong Clan has quite some rare treasures, the Sky Penetrating Grass isn't one of them," Dong Yan was stunned as he spoke to Qing Shui.

"I know. This is really a rare find. I've heard that the chances of it appearing in the Sky Penetrating Mountains seems to be slightly higher," Qing Shui said after some thought. He knew that this was something he could discuss with them.

"Mmmm, the Sky Penetrating Mountains is one of the most dangerous places in the Eastern Victory Divine Continent. The place is filled with heavenly and earthly treasures as well as rare mutated beasts. However, it's just too dangerous. 80% of the Sky Penetrating Grass out here is from the Sky Penetrating Mountains," Dong Yan looked at Qing Shui and said.

"Then that's good. I was worried that even the Sky Penetrating Mountains might not have it. Then I'd really be left with no way

out.” When Qing Shui heard Dong Yan’s words, he was slightly relieved. It was fine even if it was dangerous, at least, there was still a chance.

“If third Brother must really go in, get someone to go with you. At least you’ll be able to take care of each other and the success rate would be higher,” Dong Yan gave it some thought and said.

“Mmm, seems like it’s really dangerous inside but I’ll definitely go in.” Qing Shui had not expected that Dong Yan would say something similar to the old man from Golden Buddha Temple. It seemed like he would really need to find someone to accompany him for this trip.

“Alright, when we’ve reached the city, Eldest Brother will recommend you to a clan. This clan is a bit special and enters the Sky Penetrating Mountains once in awhile. If you were to enter with them, I’ll be at ease too,” Dong Yan gave it some thought before looking at Qing Shui seriously and saying.

“Then I’ll have to thank Eldest Brother.” Qing Shui had not expected that Dong Yan would be able to find such a clan for him. This was good as well, at least his company for the trip was settled and would probably be able to enter the Sky Penetrating Mountains soon. As long as he managed to get his hands on the Sky Penetrating Grass, he would be able to refine two medicinal pills which would increase his abilities by a lot, to the extent that he might even soar into the skies...

“We’re brothers, why the need to stand on ceremony?” Dong Yan smiled and said to Qing Shui.

Qing Shui smiled and nodded, feeling very warm inside.

It really felt more relaxing to have someone he was familiar with when in a foreign land.

...

In a barren land, a lady in crescent white colored silk clothes was looking at the sky, a light frown appearing on her beautiful face.

“Chen`er, you’re thinking about him again,” an old lady with white hair but the complexion of a youth walked up to her and spoke softly.

“Master, I’m now already a Peak Martial Saint. When will I be able to leave?” Di Chen looked at the old lady and asked.

“Chen`er, with your current abilities, you’ll not be able to help him if you were to go back. Don’t you wish to help him? You should know how he has been living all his life.” The old lady looked at Di Chen and sighed.

“Master, what cultivation level must I be at to be able to help him?” Di Chen asked the old lady.

“I haven’t told you before but I’m someone from “Lotus Realm”.” The old lady looked at Di Chen and smiled, saying.

“Lotus Realm?”

“That’s right. Not many people in the world of the nine continents know of this existence. It is one of the three sacred lands and as my disciple, you’re naturally also someone from Lotus Realm. Now, there’s a way out for you,” the old lady looked at Di Chen and said slowly.

Di Chen was now feeling slightly numbed. Looking at the old lady, she asked, “What is it?”

“Go back with me to “Lotus Realm” to take the Test of the Sacred Platform. With your bone structure and having cultivated the secret manual of the Lotus Realm, you should be able to get through it. When that happens, your abilities will improve by a lot and you will be able to receive the legacy of the sacred land. It’ll be very easy for you to help him then.” The old lady looked at Di Chen.

Di Chen had been here for a very long time and had been practicing the martial techniques the old lady had imparted to her. There was no shortage of medicinal pills and she thought that she would be able to leave after having gained some success in the martial technique but to think that a Lotus Realm sacred land had popped up.

She knew that this old lady whom she called Master would not harm her but would just do her good. Her feelings for this old lady surpassed what she had for her own father. It was because this old

lady had risked her life in order to protect Di Chen.

“Does Master wishes for me to do this?” Di Chen looked at the old lady and asked softly.

The old lady hesitated for a short moment before nodding.

“Alright, then I’ll listen to you,” Di Chen smiled and said to the old lady.

However, her heart sank. She didn’t even know the reason why it did.

...

Several huge flying beasts soared over Hundred Miles City. The one in the lead was even a green colored Mystic Bird while the other four were white-colored Tiger Swallows. A lady was standing on the huge Mystic Bird while there were four ladies who were standing on each of the respective Tiger Swallow. They were all young beautiful ladies.

The one lady on the Mystic Bird had a beautiful figure with great curves. There was no expression on her dignified and beautiful face but a hint of gentleness would appear when she looked toward the ground.

They only landed after arriving near Yu clan. By this time, many people had already gathered near Yu Clan, wanting to see who they

had offended. However, when they saw the lady in the lead, they were all stunned.

Yu He!

To think that this beautiful lady was actually Yu He who had left a few years ago. Compared to before, she had an aura that made it hard for others to get near...

“Grandfather!”

When Yu He saw Yu Donghao, she called out and ran over.

“Lass, you’re back!” A gratified smile appeared on Yu Donghao’s face. His granddaughter had grown up.

The people from Yu Clan were both surprised and happy. Just from seeing the few powerful flying demonic beasts and the auras and disposition given out by the ten plus ladies, they could tell that the Yu He today was different from before.

However, some of them felt a bit uneasy. Back then, there were quite a number of people who had not treated Yu He well. If not for the fact that Yu Donghao adored his granddaughter, she would probably have been forced to be left with nothing. But now, Yu Clan would probably be nothing to her.

Things were now different from before. What was the use of thinking of the past? One’s level determined one’s sights.

It was impossible for Yu He to forget about everything but the things in the past, especially those which were unhappy memories, were now not worth mentioning. She would not change nor did she hope to. Those who had caused trouble for her in the past were her kin by blood and on her grandfather's account, she would not deal with them. However, neither would she form good relations with them. It was not worth it.

Those who had treated her well in the past when she was down, she would return the favor to them several times over.

“Tongning, instruct the kitchen staff to prepare a more sumptuous meal,” Yu Donghao laughed happily and said.

“Yes, Old Master! A middle-aged man smiled and said before quickly leaving.”

“Young Miss, we'll head to an inn nearby,” a few young and beautiful ladies said to Yu He.

Yu He hesitated before nodding. There was no need to worry for their safety. Putting Hundred Miles City aside, there were not many people in Greencloud Continent who would dare to do anything to them.

AST 861 – Demon Refiners Mu Clan

The capital of the Eastern God Country!

“Second younger brother, third younger brother, my house is just ahead. Let’s go inside and we’ll have a drink together,” said Dong Yan as he looked toward Sun Yan and Qing Shui.

Qing Shui and Sun Yan naturally accepted Dong Yan’s offer. They could tell how strong the Dong Clan was by the impressiveness of the luxurious manor far ahead. The Dong Residence stood out very easily as it was the only magnificent residence amongst the neighboring residences.

There was a Golden Eyed Tiger Hawk Beast standing firmly at the foot of the Dong Clan’s entrance door, which quickly flew up and disappeared to the horizon as the three of them approached the entrance. At the same time, a young man guarding the entrance came forward and greeted Dong Yan.

“Young master, you’re back!” The young man smiled as he greeted Dong Yan.

“Yes. Is everything alright at home?” Dong Yan passed through the entrance and looked at the courtyard of the manor.

“Yes, everything’s fine.”

“Alright, go back to your post. Second younger brother, third

younger brother, let's go inside." A grin was plastered on Dong Yan's face as he led Sun Yan and Qing Shui into the manor of the Dong Clan.

There were no facilities that a clan of nobility would lack as they had all the necessary furnishings of a proper home. The members of the Dong Clan were all equipped with a set of basic martial skills, including the servants of the household. In a pavilion nearby, there was an old man performing swordplay all by himself.

His movements were slow, much like an elementary swordsman practicing his sword moves. However, Qing Shui was shocked when he noticed the similarity between the old man's swordplay and the Taichi Sword moves – these two had different approaches but with the same goal. The old man's swordplay wasn't as perfect as the Taichi Sword, albeit with the same concept of sword circle form – the sword could distinguish between yin and yang, further becoming the Four Emblems, which would generate the Eight Trigrams.....

Of course, the old man was in the lowest cultivation realm, which could mean that he had just learned the rudiments of the martial arts. However, Qing Shui was silently admiring the superb state of the old man as he already possessed the ways of 'Taichi'. Indeed, the sea of knowledge knows no boundaries. This old man may be the pioneer of 'Taichi' in the World of the Nine Continents – at least from Qing Shui's point of view.

The world of martial arts knew no limits, as everything stemmed from the ancestral foundations. Most logic behind each martial art had a connection to one another as they were more than one way to

perform martial art techniques. If one technique had the same concept as another, countless other techniques would essentially be connected. Only a few could reach a full comprehension of the limitless form of the martial arts in this world.

Dong Yan approached the old man until the distance between them was about 50 meters. He then observed the old man performing his swordplay, along with Qing Shui and Sun Yan. Qing Shui, on the other hand, was more enthusiastic as he observed the old man's movements and forms of the swordplay.

He could pick out the faults in the old man's swordplay down to the miniscule details, which was basically the entire form of the swordplay. Qing Shui knew that they weren't exactly mistakes per se but a form of trial and error. The old man was cultivating more on his mental state than the form itself.

After the time it took for an incense stick to burn had passed, the old man finally stopped his swordplay and turned to look at Dong Yan and his company. He showed an amiable smile and said, "We have guests, I see. How could you make them wait for so long?"

"Grandpa, they are my sworn brothers. Second younger brother and third younger brother, this is my grandfather," Dong Yan smiled and made a short introduction to one another.

"Greetings old man!"

The old man lit up and laughed when he heard his grandson's addresses to the two young men. He knew his grandson too well –

he would only recognize extraordinary people, not those with ordinary background as his sworn brothers.

“Alright, since you are Yan`er’s sworn brothers, we are family. Come, let’s go inside the house and sit down.” The old man showed a kind smile and proceeded to lead them into a living room nearby.

When the news of Dong Yan’s return spread inside the household, a group of people came to see him. Qing Shui could tell the importance of Dong Yan in the Dong Clan, almost like he was treated as an important successor to the Dong Clan.

After knowing the relationship between Dong Yan, Sun Yan and Qing Shui, the members of the Dong Clan were surprised and asked a few questions to the handsome friends. Those who could be called “brothers” to Dong Yan should never be taken lightly.

After a few polite chats, most of them quickly left the room and let them be. Introductions had been made, so it would be disrespectful to Dong Yan and his friends if they stayed any longer.

“Grandpa, do you know any clans that possess a Sky Penetrating Grass of 5,000 Years or above?” Dong Yan asked his grandfather after the other members of the Dong Clan had left. Only three of them and the old man were left in the living room, sitting down opposite to one another.

Qing Shui couldn’t quite tell what the old man was thinking exactly.

“Sky Penetrating Grass?” The old man cocked his head at Qing Shui and Sun Yan.

“Old man, it is I who need the Sky Penetrating Grass,” Qing Shui smiled.

“Young fellow, you have a good physique and an extraordinary spiritual energy – the attributes of an alchemist. In the future, you might have a boundless breakthrough toward your spiritual energy,” the old man’s eyes lit up as he spoke with a dazzling expression.

Around the same time, Qing Shui was staring at the old man’s pale white eyebrows of a foot long and his facial hair. Normally, one would be able to judge the lifespan of a man based on the length of their eyebrows, instead of the length of the hair on the head.

Just like this old man, foot long eyebrows meant that he was at least 500 years old or more. Qing Shui had an impression of unfathomable wisdom akin to a bottomless lake from the old man.

The Dong Clan must be quite powerful to be able to maintain a high position in the capital of the Eastern God Country. Qing Shui revealed a smile to the old man and replied, “That was quite insightful, old man. I will count on your blessings to see whether that will happen in the future.”

“Haha, yes, you will certainly reach a breakthrough.”

“The one from Sun Clan of the Yun City, you will become the pillar of support for the Sun Clan in 20 years.” The old man gave a merciful smile at Sun Yan. He felt quite elated to know that his grandson had met such good friends this time around.

The old man was part of the first generation of the Dong Clan. The current clan head was from the second generation and Dong Yan was part of the third generation, as well as the youngest amongst the third generation of the Dong Clan. Some members of the fourth generation were even older than him by a few years.

“The Sky Penetrating Grass is too valuable to be sold in the market and no one will boast about possessing one to the public. Ultimately, you have to find the herb yourself. 5,000 Years Sky Penetrating Grass is rare and scarce in number. It will be very difficult to find one,” the old man said to Qing Shui.

“I understand. Which is why I have decided to try my luck in the Sky Penetrating Mountains,” Qing Shui replied with a kind smile.

“The Sky Penetrating Mountains will be your best bet but know that the Sky Penetrating Grass will grow in the deeper parts of the mountains, which are essentially the most dangerous areas in the mountains. Based on your current ability, you will need to think of various ways to protect yourself from such risk in order to survive.” The old man furrowed his brows as he gave a caution to Qing Shui.

“I know. But the Sky Penetrating Grass is very important to me. I will be extra careful in the mountains,” Qing Shui replied, remembering that he still had a few tricks up his sleeves to evade

dire situations.

“Grandpa, I have decided to allow third younger brother and members of the Mu Clan to go into the Sky Penetrating Mountains. That way, everyone will be able to look after each other,” Dong Yan spoke to the old man attentively.

“That’s good. Talk to the Mu Clan when the time comes. Wait, forget it. Let me talk to the Mu Clan myself.” The old man hesitated a moment before continuing.

Qing Shui was glad when the old man offered to talk things out with the Mu Clan himself.

.....

After a meal together, Dong Yan brought Sun Yan and Qing Shui outside to have a walk around. Qing Shui was already informed that he would be travelling with the Mu Clan, a well-known powerful clan in the city.

“Brother, why do the Mu Clan still go to the Sky Penetrating Mountain often despite being extremely strong?” Qing Shui asked curiously.

“The Mu Clan is a powerful family clan of demon refiners. They are required to go into the Sky Penetrating Mountain to seek rare demonic beasts for the purpose of refining them. Sometimes, they are required to find some medicinal herbs to aid in their skills,”

Dong Yan explained with a smile. Qing Shui had always found his smile a bit odd sometimes.

“Demon refiners clan?” Qing Shui gave a perplexed look at Dong Yan.

“Being a demon refiner is a powerful job. Their main purpose is to acquire some magical crystalloids from refining demons, which can bring forth a powerful ability for martial warriors. They can also refine the demons into Crimson Pellets of abundant essence. The crystals and medicinal pellets are extremely valuable, especially the Crimson Pellets, which can significantly boost a demonic beast’s cultivation or increase the speed of cultivation of a human being simply by holding the pellet in their hands.”

That was good news. He had finally found a group of demon refiners to join his quest into the Sky Penetrating Mountains. The Spiritual Qi in the Eastern Victory Divine Continent was abundant and most eccentric warriors of various skills would be found gaining experience and proficiency with a high success rate.

Qing Shui wasn’t concerned about the fact that he was an amateur in demon refining, because he would never lose to anyone else. Even though his demon refining skills were learned through trial and error, his success rate of refinement was incomprehensible.

He had heard about sects that specialized in demon refining before but he didn’t think he would be meeting with one so soon and on top of that, the Mu Clan was also a well-known family clan in the Eastern Victory Divine Continent.

Each continent had their own cultures and architectural structures. The Eastern God Country was located at the eastern location of the World of the Nine Continents, which explained the ancient construction of the buildings and structures he had seen in this city. Additionally, the front entrance of each building would have two stone sculptures depicting a beast, either large or small. Some of the sculptures depicted lions and some were statues of kirins. The sculptures were of different sizes but all of them represented an auspicious sign as well as a protection symbol to the family and clan.

Heaven Stepping Road!

This was a famous wide road of the capital of the Eastern God Country, which was comparable to the Martial God Street in the capital of the Southern Country. The wide street was surrounded with enormously tall buildings, which were a sign of power in this part of the capital.

“Second younger brother, I forgot to ask you. Do you have something to do in the capital?” Dong Yan stopped his tracks and faced Sun Yan to ask his question.

Qing Shui was shocked. Even though he had thoughts of concern for others he did not act upon them like Dong Yan did. He turned to face Sun Yan too when Dong Yan asked him the question.

“I want to go into the Sky Penetrating Mountains too but I’m just trying my luck. My senior requires a Peach of Immortality to

extend his lifespan,” said Sun Yan as he gave a faint laugh.

Dong Yan wrinkled a frown in his forehead and said, “Although the reason for entering the Sky Penetrating Mountains for a Peach of Immortality was a bit feeble than to find the Sky Penetrating Grass, that was still a realistic goal. I didn’t quite expect you to go into the mountains to find such heavenly treasures.”

“Can’t the seniors of the clan use other ways to increase their lifespan?” said Dong Yan after pondering for a while.

“Actually, no one in the clan wants me to go. If they knew about this, they would never let me go. It will be my grandfather’s birthday in a few days, so I want to do something for him. He has already reached his age limit, so the other common medicinal pills that can increase his lifespan won’t work on him anymore,” Sun Yan forced a smile as he explained his situation.

“I commend your devotion to your family, second younger brother. But don’t hope too much for the Peach of Immortality. Prepare another gift as a backup, just in case!” said Dong Yan as he considered Sun Yan’s options.

No one in their right mind would sell off an item that could increase one’s lifespan by 50 years. Even though this type of item could not compare with the Sky Penetrating Grass, it was still an invaluable treasure.

“Second brother, let me prepare the Peach of Immortality for you. I have been keeping one all this time after I was lucky enough

to procure the fruit back in the Greencloud Continent.” Qing Shui gave an assuring smile at Sun Yan.

“This won’t do. It’s too valuable.” Sun Yan immediately declined.

“There are many valuable things in the world but this is useless to me. We are brothers, so please take it.” Qing Shui revealed a smile as he took out a brocade box and handed it to Sun Yan.

At that moment, Dong Yan was stunned. There was indeed such a precious thing in this world and he had seen it with his eyes. The third younger brother was gracious enough to offer the Peach of Immortality without the slightest hesitation.

In fact, the Peach of Immortality was really not a big deal to Qing Shui as he still had ample time to collect more in the future. Giving one to Sun Yan didn’t matter much to him, because he would do anything in his power to help his sworn brothers in a predicament.

“Take it. Consider this a favor owed to third younger brother. Next time, you must run to third younger brother’s side should he need your help in the future,” Dong Yan chuckled with delight.

“I will!” Sun Yan received the brocade box and replied with a serious tone.

AST 862 – Azure Cloud Pavilion, The Eldest Daughter Of Mu Clan

Azure Cloud Pavilion!

This was a pavilion located at the Heaven Stepping Road, as well as a business quarter of the Mu Clan. Dong Yan brought Qing Shui and Sun Yan into the pavilion to meet a new acquaintance.

Dong Yan had a strange smile on his face when he mentioned the person they were going to meet.

“Qing Shui, do you want to know who you’re going to meet?” Dong Yan maintained a smile as he glanced toward Qing Shui. They continued their pace causally into the pavilion.

“Of course!” Qing Shui smiled but set his eyes on the Azure Cloud Pavilion instead. This area stood out as an elegant architecture, with the exception of the simple undecorated doors. There was a large tablet above the door, with the words ‘Azure Cloud Pavilion’ inscribed beautifully on the surface.

The handwriting was clearly a woman’s. He could feel a strong air of elegance as he stood outside the entrance of the Azure Cloud Pavilion with the others.

Qing Shui was immediately curious just from the sense of the surrounding aura. He wanted to know who he was going to meet as he turned his head to face Dong Yan with an expression of

anticipation.

“There are many beautiful women in the capital but the most beautiful woman I have ever met would be the eldest daughter of the Mu Clan. She is the finest woman in the capital without question,” Dong Yan said as he smiled at Qing Shui.

Qing Shui now understood why Dong Yan would have such an expression whenever he mentioned the Mu Clan in their conversations.

“In other words, you’re saying that the leader of the expedition to the Sky Penetrating Mountain is none other than the eldest daughter of the Mu Clan?” Qing Shui looked at Dong Yan with surprise.

“Correct. The Azure Cloud Pavilion is the living quarters of miss Mu. She has been leading the expedition to the Sky Penetrating Mountain for a few years already.” Qing Shui could feel a sense of gloominess from Dong Yan when he mentioned the woman of the Mu Clan.

As they approached the front entrance of the Azure cloud Pavilion, two maidservants appeared and walked out from the door.

“Young Master Dong, welcome!” The maidservants were petite, yet their voices were clear and strong but with a tinge of politeness. They were said to be one of the best of their kinds as well.

“Is the young lady available?” Dong Yan asked the maidservants with a grin. Currently, Dong Yan wasn’t the frivolous man he was at the Dongfang Clan but a gentle brother of the neighborhood.

“Could it be that Dong Yan likes young miss Mu?” Qing Shui allowed himself a smile as he looked at Dong Yan. He decided to ask Dong Yan himself later during his free time.

“Yes. She’s upstairs drawing. Young Master Dong, you may enter now.” The maidservants showed polite smiles and proceeded upstairs immediately. Before they left to announce their arrival to the eldest daughter of the Mu Clan, they took a few glances at Qing Shui and Sun Yan standing behind Dong Yan.

The three of them started walking into the Azure Cloud Pavilion. The building inside was moderately spaced – not too spacious and not too narrow. The living room on the ground floor was less than a thousand square meters. The hallways stretched in curves, creeping upwards in winding paths. An aura of nobility filled the air, with a subtle smell of books lingering between the hallways.

The scent of books was the best smell in the world.

The three of them strolled along the hallway and followed the stairs covered in red silk upwards. The pavilion was three-storeys high and most importantly, there was a strange rule that they had to follow in this building.

The rule was set up due to the overwhelming number of people

who wished to gain an audience with the eldest daughter of the Mu Clan. Strangers were allowed to enter but they must display some sort of specialty in order to remain inside. If one failed to show an extraordinary skill to her, the outcome would be unthinkable. In the past, two wealthy men had thought she was easy to push around and disobeyed the rule. They were able to go inside the Azure Cloud Pavilion and got out without any problem. But as they reached the streets, they began to go mad and fought each other in public. Their clothes were shredded in the process and as a result, they brought shame to their family. Subsequently, both the wealthy men took off from the capital, as they were too embarrassed and humiliated to remain any longer.

From then on, no one had dared to plot against the Azure Cloud Pavilion ever again. Demon refiners have many tricks up their sleeves and Miss Mu was no exception as her power was known to be around the level of a Peak Martial Saint. She was the best demon refiner in the city, with the ability to stun her opponents with a small crystalloid, causing them to go mad.....

The three of them continued toward the third floor, where the space was increasingly becoming narrower. The whole area had been segmented into three parts too. As they climbed to the third floor, the two maidservants were already standing in front of the door, waiting for their arrival.

At the far end, there was a woman standing in front of a long desk but with her back facing them. Qing Shui shuddered when he saw her back. He couldn't quite describe his exact feelings.

Overwhelmed?

The slender and tall woman was wearing a golden phoenix pleated dress with wings stretching to both sides of the fabric. The phoenix pattern seemed quite vivid and lifelike, with realistic details down to the fine points. Her hair was tied up high in a bun, which brought out the beautiful structure of her long powdered neck.

The slightly loose dress could not cover the silhouette of her figure. Although her bosom and her butt were not exaggeratedly defined, they were quite noticeable as the graceful outlines pushed against her clothes.

No wonder Dong Yan said she was one in a million in the Eastern God Country. Undeniably, she could easily best all the women in the continent without much competition solely with the view of her back. Moreover, Qing Shui could sense a fluctuation of pure Spiritual Qi from the woman's body, which in a way, could be a reflection of her charm.

In a sense, her beauty was on par with the women in the Portraits of Beauty. His arrival in the Eastern Victory Divine Continent was quite theatrical when he recalled his journey so far. Even though the purpose of coming to the Azure Cloud Pavilion was largely due to him, he was able to do so because of Dong Yan.

The three of them stood still. Sun Yan and Qing Shui did so because Dong Yan wasn't moving. Sun Yan in particular was entranced by the view of her back. After staring at the woman for awhile, he finally sighed and cocked his head to the side.

“Why are you sighing, sir?”

At that moment, a clear voice rang out. Her voice was mellow, which sounded graceful to their ears, as if they were being lifted up in the air gently like a feather. Qing Shui had heard similar voices like hers before – for example, Di Chen, Yiye Jiange, Canghai Mingyue and Hai Dongqing; their voices had somewhat similar effects..... Even though their tones were different, their voices were very pleasant to the ears.

“My dearest miss, I feel unworthy to be graced with the view of your back.” Sun Yan smiled bitterly.

Qing Shui didn't expect Sun Yan to speak such words. The woman in front of the long desk didn't seem to show a big reaction. Instead, she put down her paint brush and slowly turned around to reveal a divine appearance that could captivate the hearts of men.

Her pleasantly arched brows sat proportionally on her smooth-looking skin, in contrast to the her bright gleaming eyes. Her shoulders were sharply padded, which enhanced her graceful figure and her independant aura. She was a refined woman, much like a delicate orchid arching in an elegant posture.

The golden phoenix dress added a touch of nobility to her poise, making her seem like a fairy from the Ninth Heavens.

Despite her elegance and refined demeanor, Qing Shui still felt that the woman from the crystal coffin was more divine than she was. However, this eldest daughter of the Mu Clan was not inferior

as she possessed an elegance akin to the woman in the crystal coffin – both of them were sophisticated and charming in a similar fashion.

“Mr. Dong, these two must be your friends,” the woman’s voice rang out once again. Her voice was quite pleasant. Listening to her voice was a very invigorating experience.

“They are my sworn brothers, closer than biological brothers, in fact,” said Dong Yan. He added the last few words nonchalantly, yet he was quite serious about his choice of words.

Miss Mu and Dong Yan had known each other for a while and she knew the young master of Dong Clan was very perceptive toward people who had attempted to approach him, which was why he only had a handful of friends. However, every man was born to be exceptional. If these two could become Dong Yan’s brothers of close bonds, then it was enough to say that these two men were undoubtedly outstanding and remarkable.

“Rules are rules. If you want to stay in the Azure Cloud Pavilion, then you must show me a specialty skill that will allow me to feel content,” the woman curved her lips as she said to Dong Yan, Qing Shui and Sun Yan.

There was a hint of mystery in her tone. Her voice was undeniably as beautiful as ever.

Sun Yan glanced toward Qing Shui and nodded his head. Then he extended his right arm, promptly gathering an overwhelming

Spiritual Qi around his body from the surroundings of the room. It was at this moment that the woman finally spoke in a clear voice, “You pass!”

“Your turn!” Sun Yan prodded Qing Shui after a moment of silence. He wanted to see Qing Shui’s specialty skill – something extraordinary to satisfy his curiosity.

“Patience, brother. Let me think for a moment. There’s too many to choose from and I can only show one.” Qing Shui wasn’t fooling around but ‘too many’ wasn’t entirely true either. He racked his brain trying to think of one skill that would truly awe the woman in one fell swoop.

The others were left speechless by Qing Shui’s words. How many specialties would one require in this world? Normally, having one specialty skill was enough to defy nature, much less having multiple up his sleeves.

“Were you drawing just now, miss?” Qing Shui perked his head up and asked the woman.

“Yes, I was!”

Qing Shui paused, then continued to asked the woman, “Well, does drawing count as a specialty?”

“Of course. The greatest artist can conquer the whole world with painting alone,” she smiled as she answered Qing Shui.

“Then I will paint a portrait!” Qing Shui said while thinking of a subject to paint.

“Please go ahead!”

Initially, he thought about using her as the subject but that would be quite disrespectful to do so as they had just met each other. Qing Shui picked up her paintbrush and proceeded to dip the brush into the ‘ink’ with his eyes closed.

The woman’s expression changed as she kept watch on his movements. Her eyes were brightly lit and she found herself staring at him with anticipation.

Suddenly, Qing Shui’s blood flow turned berserk, which seemed quite exaggerated yet necessary. It was quite indescribable when he felt an abrupt change to his blood flow and before he knew it, he began moving his hands. His brushwork was flexible and lively with a bit of force in his movement. After a while, he had made a rough sketch of his art.

An outline of a beautiful figure appeared on the portrait.

After that, the facial features of the portrait became more distinct. The more distinct the portrait appeared, the more shocking the woman was. Within a few moments, Dong Yan and Sun Yan had the same expression as the woman as they continued to follow Qing Shui’s brushwork on the portrait.

When he finally finished the portrait, he stopped and put down the brush before he opened his eyes. Even though he took a lot more time compared to Sun Yan, he had shown a unyielding flow in his effort to accomplish his composition of the portrait. Qing Shui took the effort to draw the portrait with unfathomable details, resulting in a portrait akin to a live figure of a beautiful woman.

The woman in the portrait had her hair tied up high. Her brows were soft-looking, illustrating a kind expression on her white face. The white complexion wasn't a product of a powdered makeup but her natural skin with a hint of rosy glow. She had the features of a goddess but with a pair of eyes depicting the cold winds of winter.

Even though her eyes were beautiful, there was a hint of hatred and helplessness in addition to the dazed expression in her eyes. With one look at the portrait, everyone could tell that the woman in the portrait was undeniably as beautiful as the eldest daughter of the Mu Clan – the figure in the portrait was a woman as dignified as the goddess.

Qing Shui didn't realize that he had drawn the woman from the crystal coffin. Worst of all, he had drawn the exact expression of the woman when she woke up and stared at him.....

Looking at the portrait, Qing Shui was inevitably brought back to the memories of that moment. The woman in the crystal coffin did not kill him but spared him instead. She must be hating herself for not being able to kill him right away.

Qing Shui let out a long breath of air, as if he was letting out a deep sigh of relief.

“So cold but so beautiful. Is she your wife?” The eldest daughter of Mu Clan asked curiously. She didn’t expect this man to possess a skill in drawing much superior than hers, much more superior, in fact.

Qing Shui was stunned by her question but shook his head to her reply. He wasn’t prepared for her question but didn’t want to brush her off without giving a definite answer. In such circumstance, one would require much practice to be able to draw a woman to such an extent, even without emotions or personal feelings.....

Qing Shui wasn’t troubled by her question. He put on a smile and replied, “I’m not sure if this is considered a skill. If it’s not, I can try something else.”

“You really do have other skills? Are you sure you want to show something else?” The woman smirked.

“Then this should be enough. Let’s leave it at that!” Qing Shui didn’t want to expose his abilities too much, so showing another one was quite unnecessary. He had other aces up in his sleeves but who wouldn’t have at least more than one in order to survive in this world?

“Then sit wherever you please!” The woman welcomed them to the ‘couch’ inside. In front of the couch was a small table with cups

of tea freshly prepared moments ago.

“Actually, Miss Mu, today we came to ask you for a favor,” Dong Yan spoke slowly after they had all settled down.

“Oh, do tell. You rarely ask favors from others, so I will not refuse if it’s within my capability.”

AST 863 – Preparation, Peak Martial Saint Thunderous Beast

“Oh, go ahead. You, Young Master Dong, seldom asks for favors. As long as it’s within my means, I won’t reject you.”

The lady sat opposite Dong Yan and company. In the middle, there was a very large tea table between them, keeping them at a distance of three meters apart. This was how Mu Clan’s Young Miss did things. Usually, people would be unable to get within three meters of her.

“My brother Qing Shui wants to enter the Sky Penetrating Mountains. Therefore, I’d like for you guys to let him join you when you enter. I’ll definitely offer my great thanks,” Dong Yan said to the lady.

The lady was in no hurry to promise Dong Yan. She frowned slightly and looked at Qing Shui. At this moment, it was as if she wanted to use her beautiful eyes to see through Qing Shui.

“You’re sure that you want to go?” The lady said softly, looking at Qing Shui.

“I’m sure!”

“To be honest, even for us, we don’t have absolute confidence that we’ll be able to stay alive. It’s just that we’ve been quite lucky. I won’t say much if you were to want to go but I won’t be able to

guarantee your safety. It's because no one who goes will be able to guarantee that they'll be able to come back," the lady smiled lightly and said.

Qing Shui knew that the lady was in fact saying this to Dong Yan or maybe she was telling him but the intention was for Dong Yan to know about it. The lady's cautiousness was something which Qing Shui felt was good. This was only normal.

"I know. Actually, I would have gone in even if I went by myself. However, Eldest Brother is worried and wants me to find company. This is why we're here to trouble Miss." Qing Shui was speaking the truth.

"If that's the case, I don't mind going together. With more people, we can help take care of each other. After all, there's still some time before we enter the Sky Penetrating Mountains. During this time, you can decide to withdraw anytime. It's really dangerous inside."

Qing Shui knew that she didn't wish for him to go since she wouldn't feel at ease. She was leading her own people in and could command them as she wished. The efficiency would be greater this way. If there were outsiders, that would not be the case. It was not good to be giving instructions to outsiders but if her own people were all able to return with just the exception of himself, she would find it hard to explain it to Dong Clan.

"I understand. When the time comes, there's no need to stand on ceremony with me. I'll listen to whatever you say. If there are any accidents, I would be the one to be blamed too. The blame

wouldn't be on you." Qing Shui knew what the lady was thinking and thus made it clear.

The lady knew that Qing Shui could tell what she was implying. This was good as well since it wouldn't be that nice to make everything too clear. She then turned to Dong Yan, "There's no need for thanks. I just hope that everyone will be safe."

"Miss Mu, when will we be setting off?" Qing Shui gave it some thought and asked

"Between half a month to one month," the lady gave it some thought, smiled and said.

"Mmm, is there anything I'll need to prepare?" Qing Shui gave it some thought and said.

"If you have medicine for injuries or antidotes, try to bring as many as you can. They might be useful. It's best if they are medicinal pills which can instantly recover one's physical strength. If you don't have any, I'll prepare some for you. Bring along everything that you feel is useful. It's extremely dangerous in the Sky Penetrating Mountains and sometimes, there's nowhere to hide and the only option is to fight it out. We might even need to kill a large group of demonic beasts," the lady said casually.

"Oh, I have all of these," Qing Shui quickly smiled and said.

"Oh, then that's good!"

Seeing that it was about time, Dong Yan and company took their leave, with the lady seeing them to the door. Looking at the time, the three of them went to look for an inn for a drink.

There was an inn not far away from Azure Cloud Pavillion, “Elegance Inn”!

To be able to set up an inn along Heaven Stepping Road, they were definitely no ordinary people. The three of them entered and very quickly, a waiter came out to welcome them. The three of them sat in a corner. They neither wanted to enter a private room nor mix with the crowd, thus they chose a corner in the hall.

They opened a pint of “Flowerain Wine” and a strong fragrance flowed out. This was a mellow wine which had aged at least 100 years. Qing Shui did not take out his treasured collection of mellow wines, each of which had an age of 1,000 years. It was just that it was not appropriate to take it out now. Moreover, it was still better to try the local wine available when in a new place and he wanted to store some in his collection. After all, there was sufficient space in the Realm of the Violet Jade Immortal.

“Have you guys heard? Cheng Clan has came across a Chieftain Level demonic beast in the Sky Penetrating Mountains and all of them were wiped out. Cheng Clan is considered to have fallen.”

Just as the three of them were drinking, an abrupt voice rang out, causing Qing Shui’s brows to furrow tightly. It was because Qing Shui had came across a Chieftain Level demonic beast back in

the Flowerfruit Mountain.

“This was all because of their greed. A large majority of the capable people in the clan had entered the Sky Penetrating Mountains, all for the sake of that Bloodjade Crystal. Then this happened.” The one who spoke was a long-haired middle-aged man from the same table as the previous person who said that.

“I heard that there’s no match for that Chieftain Level demonic beast amongst all Martial Emperor cultivators,” a guy who was wearing a beautiful set of clothes said.

A Chieftain Level demonic beast had basically reached a powerful level and those who had entered its territory, regardless whether man or demonic beast, would have their abilities weakened while its own abilities would be strengthened. With one side being weakened and the other side strengthened, the gap was very very different.

“Do you know what that Chieftain Level demonic beast was?” A young man asked curiously.

“It seemed to be the Golden Dragon King!”

...

Qing Shui was also slightly nervous. If he were to come across a Chieftain Level demonic beast like that, would he be able to escape? He had the chance to use the Nine Continent Steps twice

and had also six hours in the Realm of the Violet Jade Immortal. Now, his spirit energy had soared by a lot and as long as he was not completely confined, he should be fine.

Moreover, he still had the Buddha's True Eyes. Qing Shui had long since started to cultivate the Buddha's True Eyes and its greatest use now was to increase his spirit energy and increase his resistance to attacks from spirit energy. It also let his Vajra's Glare progress even faster.

He had yet to reach the small success stage and did not have the ability to attack his opponent's "soul".

...

In the middle, Qing Clan knew that Dong Yan's grandfather had gone to Mu Clan once. Although Miss Mu was the one to call the shots in regards to entering the Sky Penetrating Mountains, there were still a couple of experts from Mu Clan who had gone alone. It could be said that she was the only youngster from Mu Clan who was entering the Sky Penetrating Mountains. The others were at least middle-aged, with a great majority of the group being old men. They were Mu Clan's main force.

In the Realm of the Violet Jade Immortal!

Qing Shui watched as his demonic beasts were gradually powering up. After all, there was plenty of time in the Realm of the Violet Jade Immortal. During this time, the Fire Bird and the Jade Emperor Queen Bee had powered up the fastest. It could be because

they had been “born” in the Realm of the Violet Jade Immortal.

One thing that made Qing Shui happy was that the horde of Jade Emperor Bees had grown to close to 1,000 in number. Before the Jade Emperor Queen Bee attained a breakthrough to Peak Martial Saint, the Jade Emperor Bees would no longer increase in numbers.

Out of the 1,000 Jade Emperor Bees, half of them were at Peak Martial King level, three of them had attained a breakthrough to elementary Martial Saint. This made Qing Shui very excited. After a few more years, they would all become powerful demonic beasts and it would be a big group of them. Maybe, by then, the numbers would grow even higher. Imagining the scene where all the Jade Emperor Bees shot out their stingers made Qing Shui very agitated.

The Gold-Silver Colored Butterflies were always around. They could fly around in the Realm of the Violet Jade Immortal, going everywhere. Even some medicinal herbs had started to appear on some empty spaces far away. Those were the acts of the Jade Emperor Bees and the Gold-Silver Colored Butterflies. They must have unintentionally scattered the seeds.

That Ice Snow Sacred Fruit from two days ago had also matured. Qing Shui once again fed it to the Thunderous Beast. The two Ice Snow Sacred Fruits had pushed it to Peak Martial Saint and its cultivation had increased by a tremendous leap. It was quite a big achievement for a Grade Ten Martial Saint to reach Peak Martial Saint.

Even Qing Shui felt that luck was on his side. The two Ice Snow

Sacred Fruits were well worth it. It had increased the Thunderous Beast's physical strength from one star to three stars, causing him to feel very excited.

He could not help but looked at the Thunderous Beast's powerful battle techniques.

Violet Thunder Protection: Unique ability of the Thunderous Beast, can increase all abilities to become two times stronger. It doesn't deplete energy and automatically circulates. If it received physical attacks, the Thunderous Beast has a chance of inflicting paralysis on the opponent.

Having its abilities increased, the Thunderous Beast which now had a strength of six stars, had improved greatly in various aspects. Most importantly, those who dealt it physical blows would end up in a tragic state. As for those who attacked with magic arts, the Thunderous Beast could dodge with its speed. Moreover, the Thunderous Beast's resistance ability was now also extremely powerful.

Thunderbolt: Releasing an electrifying attack through the Core within four hundred meters. The attack would have a slight paralyzing, speed reducing, reaction reducing effect on the opponent. The effects could be accumulated.

"Mmm, it has leveled up!"

Qing Shui hadn't noticed the distance previously but now, he realized that it could reach twice as far as before. This was good. It

could now attack opponents from afar now.

There was not much change to the Violet Lightning Strike and the Lightning Recovery.

As for medicinal pills and such, Qing Shui had accumulated enough of them and naturally did not need to worry. He had also accumulated quite a lot of experience for the next alchemy recipe.

...

Unknowingly, half a month went by. Qing Shui didn't stay at Dong Clan but at the Elegance Inn on the Heaven Stepping Road, the place where the three of them had had a drink the previous time. It was very close to Azure Cloud Pavillion.

Sun Yan had returned to Yun City and said that he would return after some time. Therefore, there was only Qing Shui and Dong Yan now and they would occasionally go to Azure Cloud Pavillion.

"Eldest Brother also came to Azure Cloud Pavillion frequently in the past?" Qing Shui smiled and looked at Dong Yan.

"Not really," Dong Yan shook his head and said.

"Does Eldest Brother like Miss Mu?" Qing Shui looked seriously at Dong Yan, waiting to check out his reaction.

Dong Yan didn't appear to find it strange nor was he surprised. He merely looked at Qing Shui, gave it some thought before shaking his head and saying, "It's normal for men to like her. But it's not good to fall in love with her, otherwise you'll go crazy."

"She eventually has to get married. She can't possibly refuse to get married forever?" Qing Shui smiled and looked at Dong Yan.

"Regardless of whether she will be getting married or not, our relationship will stop at friends. There's no other possibility. And if a guy who's good enough for her doesn't appear, she might stay single forever," saying this, Dong Yan also smiled.

Qing Shui shook his head. He had not expected that a person like Dong Yan would also have moments where he would feel inferior. It wasn't hard to feel inferior. For example, the fact that Dong Yan was not as powerful as her was sufficient.

Dong Yan appeared very at ease when he said this but Qing Shui knew that he was controlling himself, making himself not fall in love with that lady. Knowing that nothing would come of it, so he shouldn't go ahead with it. Otherwise, in the end, he would be the one who would be covered in injuries.

"But third Brother, I feel that you have a chance." Dong Yan looked at Qing Shui and that familiar smile appeared again.

"Me? Forget it. I already have several wives and a few kids," Qing Shui smiled and said.

AST 864 – Heading Toward Sky Penetrating Mountains

“Third brother has married quite early but a man having three or four wives is very common. However, it would seem a little difficult for Miss Mu and other women to share the same man. This miracle will be for third brother to create. I await the future,” Dong Yan said with a slight mischievous smile.

“I truly don’t have any interest now!” replied Qing Shui as he shook his head. What he said was the truth. This woman was very beautiful, not the least bit inferior to the women in the Portraits of Beauty.

In fact, from the start Qing Shui had never assumed that the girls within the Portraits of Beauty were the twelve most beautiful. However, they absolutely had the best skeletal structures, outstanding spirit and had divine bodies. After all, the World of the Nine Continents was incomparably vast and the number of humans living in it could not be counted.

Dong Yan did not continue saying anything as this kind of matter was unpredictable. What’s more, he was unable to act naturally in front of this woman.

Between a man and a woman, if one party feels inferior in any aspect, there would basically not be anything happening unless the opposite party takes the initiative. However, that was seemingly impossible, as there was no one who would love a person who would feel inferior in front of one’s self.

Qing Shui did not have any feelings for the woman after standing in front of her. At least he did not feel inferior, as he did not have any ulterior motives. Therefore he was able to continue being magnanimous and open-hearted.

“Okay, they’re here,” Dong Yan said as he pointed towards big miss Mu and a group of people.

Qing Shui looked over to see approximately twenty incoming people. The majority were old people and leading them was big miss Mu dressed in a phoenix dress. Her beautiful hair was tied up high in the air as usual, with a white jade hairpin in it, making her appear even more noble.

Faintly rocking while she walked, her gait appeared to give off the feeling of walking on air. Her entire being gave off the feeling of superiority, with a noble and grand feeling rushing into their eyes. This was a superior elegance that came from the deepest level of her.

This was a woman that made even Dong Yan feel inferior.

“I’m ready,” the lady said softly.

“Yes, I’m prepared too,” Qing Shui replied with a smile.

“I’ll have to trouble Miss Mu then,” said Dong Yan toward eldest Miss Mu.

The lady nodded her head before whispering, “Then let us get going.”

“Okay. Be careful and have a safe journey. Take care,” said Dong Yan to Qing Shui and eldest Miss Mu with a smile.

“Thanks!” the lady replied with a smile.

“Big brother, let’s have a drink after I return,” Qing Shui said to Dong Yan while waving his hand.

.....

Among the twenty people, Qing Shui and big miss Mu were the only young people. There were two middle aged refined males among the rest, who were uncles of the Mu Family girl. From the looks of it, a man at eighty years of age truly was at the peak of his charm.

The rest were all old people. Without a single movement on his face, Qing Shui was able to sense that all of them were at least Peak Martial Saint experts.

There were two old ladies among them, while the rest were old men.

Everyone was riding alone on their flying mounts. Before setting

off, the Mu family girl had said that if the situation became irreversible, the more people who are able to escape the better it would be. There was no need to prove one's loyalty, as long as the Mu Family was able to preserve as much strength as possible.

Qing Shui knew about the situation she was talking about. This was similar to the situation the Cheng Family had faced when met with the "Golden Jiao King" in circumstances where they couldn't escape total annihilation; whoever could escape should escape, even sacrificing one's life to give others the chance to escape.

The lady's mount was a golden Luan. Qing Shui summoned his own Fire Bird. The Fire Bird was known as a red Luan within the World of the Nine Continents and was also called the Fiery Luan. They were considered the same species of demonic beast and the only difference between them was the element they possessed.

Di Chen's mount was a Blue Luan. It was said that the Luan was the offspring of the phoenix, possessing the bloodline of the phoenix within its body. Looking at the Golden Luan which was not a bit inferior to his Firebird, Qing Shui still felt that his Firebird was more formidable...

When the Mu Family girl saw Qing Shui's Firebird, she was flabbergasted for a moment. There were not many of this kind of mutated beast. Furthermore, the Luan was comparatively intelligent, thus wanting to subdue it with brute strength was impossible.

The demonic beast mounts of the remaining people were similarly very strong, with eagles, falcons and other feathery birds.

All of them were fundamentally built for speed and endurance. Even if their attack power was insufficient they still needed to have speed and endurance.

The twenty some gigantic flying demonic beasts flew towards the east in an earth-shattering manner. It was a spectacular sight, as after all each demonic beast was very large. With their wings spread out, they were akin to a cloud, added with distance between them when they spread out, they looked as if they could cover the skies and envelop the earth.

This was the Eastern God Country, also considered a prefectural region of the Eastern Victory Divine Continent. After all they were connected together and this it was difficult to separate clearly. This place was already the most eastern part and only needed a three day journey to reach the Sky Penetrating Mountains.

A three day journey wasn't a short distance but that was normal. The Sky Penetrating Mountains were filled with all kinds of dangers and they could not be too near to the city. Therefore the city was quite a distance away from it to ensure its safety.

On the way, the members of the Mu Family were regularly thrown into disorder. It was fortunate that Qing Shui's Firebird was a pretty good mount. Its intelligence was extremely high and in fact was a cut above the Mu Family girl's Golden Luan.

Although Qing Shui had not given it any heavenly treasures for a very long time, the Spiritual Qi within the Realm of the Violet Immortal was much thicker than on the outside, even the Eastern Victory Divine Continent was unable to compare with it.

The Firebird's strength had already reached approximated nine thousand countries but was still much more weaker than the Lightning Beast. The Lightning Beast was like an "assassin" to Qing Shui and was used for a single target kill. Even when collaborating with him, it would also be used for single target kills.

The Diamond Gigantic Elephant was able to attack multiple targets. The Mighty Elephant Stomp was very formidable, however this was the Sky Penetrating Mountains. With a killing power of less than nine stars, the Mighty Elephant Stomp would be barely enough in coping with the strong demonic beasts present here.

Therefore Qing Shui had upgraded the Lightning Beast, as strong demonic beasts that could threaten such a large group of people would generally not appear in a large group, the possibility of beasts appearing alone was the largest. Therefore, the usefulness of the Lightning Beast here would be immeasurable.

Very quickly they had arrived at the city walls. The walls here were even higher than those of the continent's capital and were also very hard and stable. This was built to withstand bestial tides. Although demonic beasts of Martial Saint Stage and above were able to fly, there were many more demonic beasts that were below Martial Saint Stage and they were not possible to be fully killed off.

On top of the tall city walls were strong mechanical bows. This kind of bow required the energy of one's inner core to operate them. The arrows they launched were coated with strong poisons

or made with the bones of strong demonic beasts, thus their might was rather strong.

Flying past this city, they were met with a large swampland, with numerous pathways branching from the central path. This gigantic swampland was a natural barrier for the city, however it was a pity that it could not block flying demonic beasts.

The Mu Family girl led the group as they flew towards their destination with ease. Flying behind her was Qing Shui and his Firebird. Looking at the figure on the back of the Golden Luan, he could only sigh as he thought, was it a good or bad thing for this woman to be have such great strength?

The lady within the crystal coffin was undeniably stronger than this lady. However, Qing Shui would avoid even thinking about that lady even in his subconscious mind. He did not know why either.

Although he had woken her up and even helped her dispel the poison in her body, he had taken away her most precious thing. At that time it was already very fortunate she didn't kill him. However, Qing Shui still felt that he fell slightly short of making it up to her. He had left without turning his head then in fear of his life and also for his pitiful pride.

There was no one else to blame when you have a good heart and did bad thing. That matter with Yun Duan made up for the pain in Qing Shui's heart, making him feel slightly better. He was unable to be unaffected by his feelings. Therefore, he had currently put in some effort to avoid being entangled in any new relationships.

However the world was full of variables and fate makes fun of people.

On the back of the Fire Bird, Qing Shui daydreamed due to the abundant free time. Just like that they had flown for an entire day. Even Demonic Beasts needed to stop to rest for a while, the energy consumption when flying quickly was very high.

Once they left the city, there was still a very long distance to the Sky Penetrating Mountains, which was basically no man's land. However no one could be certain that there were no villages or hidden families living in this region.

The skies had already turned dark. This was a vast and expansive wilderness and one could not see the end of it. The ground below their feet was strewn with weeds and one could see a ten metre tall stone slope not far from where they landed, looking especially clean. Everyone started to walk over there, as it was best to pitch tents there if they were to have a rest.

Putting away their mounts, they walked towards that stone slope. This time Qing Shui saw the Mu Family girl walking without her feet touching the ground.

At the top of the stone slope was a flat surface that was not big, looking glossy and clean. Not only was it enough for them to pitch their tents there, it gave them a vantage point to have an endless view of their surroundings. A distance not far from them was a stream, its gurgling noises ringing clearly.

Qing Shui pitched his own tent, while the others also pitched theirs. Qing Shui's actions were very quick, however when he brought out a bed, it made everyone gawk...

One had to know that everyone present had Interspatial Silk Sachets, however most of them were not capable of fitting such a big bed in them. Today there were only two present, with the Mu Family girl having a similarly powerful Interspatial tool.

It was considered very common for a Martial Saint and above to have a Interspatial Silk Sachet. However this did not mean that a Interspatial Silk Sachet was not precious, just that the higher grade Interspatial Tools were more precious.

After pitching the tents, everyone went to rest and eat. If there were wild beasts in their surroundings, they would eat some wild game, if not they would eat the food they have brought along.

Looking at his surroundings, Qing Shui started walking towards small stream.

"What are you doing?" the Mu Family girl who had coincidentally looked at Qing Shui asked.

Hearing her words, Shui gawked. Never did he imagine that she would ask about him. Actually, even the lady did not know why did she acted out so suddenly. After all, there was still no danger around here. In addition he was only going to leave for a moment, it wasn't necessary for her to ask in such an urgent manner. Furthermore, he still had some urgent business to settle...

“I’m going to find something to eat. It’s alright. There isn’t any danger around here,” Qing Shui said as he looked at the girl who was currently feeling slightly unnatural.

“Let’s go together then!” added the girl immediately.

Qing Shui knew the other party was concealing something or perhaps she was worried about him.

“Okay!”

The two of them proceeded to walk toward the small stream not far from there.

The old people and the two middle aged men of the Mu Family were astonished for a while upon seeing this happen. This was the first time they had seen their young miss standing alone with a man...

“Third uncle, seventh uncle, I’ll go prepare something to eat,” a middle aged man said to two of the old men in the lead.

“They’ve already left. Just let them go. Miss hasn’t taken any action yet,” said an interested old man.

Qing Shui and the Mu Family girl walked over to the little stream. The grass growing on the ground impeded their

movements, resulting in them walking very slowly. When they had arrived here, they had all been sitting on their individual mounts, thus there was not much interaction between them.

Although it could be considered that they had interacted a few times in the city, this was the first time they were together by themselves.

Until now Qing Shui still did not know the name of the girl and only knew her as the big miss of the Mu Family.

“How many times have you been to the Sky Penetrating Mountains?” Qing Shui asked softly after walking a distance. With the two of them keeping silent, the atmosphere was slightly stifling.

AST 865 – She Has The Mystical Connection Divine Sword?

“This is the tenth time” the lady said softly.

“How often do you guys enter Sky Penetrating Mountains?” Qing Shui asked casually.

“This is not fixed. Most of the time, we would enter twice a year at most, with no fixed timing. We just happened to be going in this time and you had the same intention,” the lady smiled and said.

As they carried on with their casual chat, they arrived by a river which was only a 100 meters wide and about 100 meters deep. It was so clear that one could see the bottom of the river and the gushing sound of the water was very calming.

There were plenty of fish and prawns in the water and since the water was very clear, Qing Shui had wanted to catch some. He decided that the menu for the night was to eat fish and drink fish soup.

Qing Shui took out the Pure Gold Fishing Rod and looked at the sky. Although it was going to be dark soon, it was not very late yet. Moreover, if he were to use the Pure Gold Fishing Rod, he might be able to fish out something good. And even if he couldn't, at least the fish and fish soup for dinner would be settled.

Qing Shui held the fishing rod and looked at the lady from Mu

Clan, “It’s not late yet. How about we catch some fish?”

“Alright, I haven’t seen someone fishing before.” The lady seemed to be looking with great interest at the fishing rod Qing Shui was holding.

The two of them found a spot and Qing Shui tossed in the fishing line.

Looking at this small river, although Qing Shui knew the great power of the Pure Gold Fishing Rod, he had not held much expectation that anything good would come of it. The water here was so clear that he could see the bottom with one look. Therefore, he shouldn’t be able to fish out any treasures.

Moreover, he had not planned to fish out any treasures. He only wanted to catch fish and prawns.

“It’s moving!”

The lady saw that a fish had bitten the hook and said happily.

However, after the lady said that, the fish which had bitten the hook escaped.

“Ah, I’m sorry.” The lady looked at Qing Shui apologetically.

“It’s nothing. This is very normal.” Qing Shui smiled to indicate

that it was not much.

On the second attempt, he successfully fished up a Green Tailed Fish which was about one foot in size. The lady from Mu Clan looked from the side, not making a sound but joy was reflected on her face.

She was usually very busy or rather, she had been busy since she was young. Although she had outstanding talent, she still needed to spend a large amount of time on her cultivation. Therefore, she had spent all of her time cultivating.

Moreover, she still had a powerful treasure. Otherwise, the rate of her progress would not be as fast.

She had eaten a good share of fish and prawns in her life but this was the first time that she had seen someone fishing from so close up. She felt that this was very new and she even had an urge to attempt it herself.

Qing Shui didn't look at the lady from Mu Clan but he could sense faintly the ripples in her heart. He could easily guess that this lady should have gone through a lot. If she hadn't, she would not have reached the level she was at today. It seemed like she was so busy that she did not even have the time to fish.

This was not an exaggeration. Not everyone could have a Realm of the Violet Jade Immortal like he did and could at most rely on medicine or other items to make better use of their time.

He then continued to successfully fish up three Green Tailed Fish, five crabs which were one foot in size and a lobster that was the size of his palm. Qing Shui turned to see that Mu Clan's lady was looking at his fishing rod.

“Do you want to give it a go?” Qing Shui smiled and said. He could tell that the lady had wanted to try but couldn't bring it up.

“Alright!” The lady said happily.

Receiving Qing Shui's Pure Gold Fishing Rod, after listening to Qing Shui's explanation of how it was used, she then started to fish.

When she fished up her first fish, she was extremely happy. This was the first time that Qing Shui had seen her with such a smile after having seen her so many times. It was a really happy smile. When a dignified lady smiled, it would be so graceful that one would be stunned.

“I've managed to catch something!” There was a grace and a hint of charm in her voice.

The lady's tone had an unconcealed joy to it, as if she was a kid who had received a toy she liked. Qing Shui smiled and watched from the side. He didn't know what he was feeling now but he was happy to see the lady being happy as well. It was a very simple feeling, just like the spreading of happiness. For example, when you're with a few people, when someone smiles at you, you'll smile back.

Qing Shui took out a bucket and then started to clean up the fish, prawns and crabs.

The lady seemed to like fishing and only after Qing Shui told her that it was enough did she turn to see that the whole bucket was full. She smiled and brought back the fishing rod, handing it back to Qing Shui.

Qing Shui put away the Pure Gold Fishing Rod, lifted up the bucket and headed back with the lady. This was the first time the Pure Gold Fishing Rod had not fished out something good but it was within his expectations.

If he were able to fish out good items and treasures regardless of the place, then Qing Shui wouldn't have to do anything but to go fishing every day.

On the way back, he found some dried wood and started a fire directly when they arrived at the tent. There was roasted fish, fish soup, as well as things like roasted prawns and crabs.

Qing Shui didn't dare to say that his culinary skills were top notch but with the outstanding ingredients and his skill, he had not come across anyone who could do it better than him. It was also fun to be making some food in his free time, especially when he was at home, cooking for the women he liked and for his children. It was a great happiness and enjoyment.

When that intoxicating fragrance flowed out, even those old

fogeys couldn't help but twitch their noses and stare at the steaming fish soup, roasted fish...

They had eaten a lot of fish before and while this 'fish type' was quite good, it could only be considered above average. However, this fragrance was even better than the best top grade fish they had eaten before.

There were more than twenty of them and each of them had brought their own utensils. Qing Shui was the last in the line and he finished up a huge serving of fish, prawns and other food.

Even the lady from the Mu Clan ate a roasted fish and drank a bowl of fish soup. Although she was considered to have eaten the least amongst the people here, she knew that this was the one time she had eaten the most and she still had a craving for more.

"This is the best food this old man has eaten in my life. Haha, I wouldn't have any regrets even if I were to die in the Sky Penetrating Mountains this time," an old man finished up the last mouthful of his fish soup and said happily.

"Seventh Uncle, you're still young. There's still plenty chances in the future. Don't be thinking otherwise," a middle-aged man looked weirdly at the old man and said.

"Rascal, you enjoy eating even more than me. Don't think that I have no idea what you're planning. Go tell that to the lass." The old man clearly didn't fall into the trap.

“This is really considered a world grade delicacy. The spiritual energy in Eastern Victory Divine Continent is very strong and I’ve also eaten quite a lot of good food but to think that an ordinary Green Tailed Fish could taste this good. The skill of those imperial chefs are dogshit when compared to this young man’s,” an old man said.

“Old Eight, we’re eating. Can you be more civilized?”

“Cough cough...”

Mu Clan’s lady was next to Qing Shui. Maybe it was because they were closer in age and thus they just naturally stood next to each other with no other thoughts. However, to other people, this looked like a entirely different scene.

It was because many people realized that the two of them looked very harmonious or rather, they seemed to be a good match when they were standing together. It was a feeling they gave off. This young man was very mature and hid a terrifying power. He was also giving off an indescribable feeling.

After the meal, it was still early. The old men started to gather around in groups to chat. They were brothers, partners and companions who had been working together for many years. They had great rapport and strong relationships. It was a true brotherhood.

Therefore, they had endless topics to chat about.

Mu Clan's lady had returned to her tent. Qing Shui looked at the sky and greeted the others before he entered his tent. He then went into the Realm of the Violet Jade Immortal.

However, before he did that, he called out the Ten Thousand Poisonous Violet Sable.

This way, if someone was looking for him, he could be notified.

His Heart of Roc was already at the large success stage but the Roc Spreading Wings was still at the small success stage and was still far away from attaining the large success stage. His abilities were improving rapidly but it still required a very long period of time. For each technique to reach the greatest height, it would take a tremendous amount of time. Moreover, Qing Shui was cultivating over ten techniques. If he didn't have the Realm of the Violet Jade Immortal, he wouldn't be able to afford to do so.

Thousand Crane Slash!

This technique had already reached the large success stage and as he swung his hands, three pairs of palm shadows attacked at the same time. This was the prowess of the Thousand Crane Slash. It was just like the Nine Waves Great Golden Buddha Palm, just that one technique emphasized focused attacks while the other was for dispersed attacks, both of which had their own advantages. However, the current prowess of the Thousand Crane Slash was still not comparable to the Six Waves.

The concentrated attacks of the Nine Waves Great Golden

Buddha Palm had high damage and could be used against people with powerful defences. On the other hand, the Thousand Crane Slash's dispersed attacks, when used against people stronger than him, especially those with defences stronger than his attacks, would be basically useless.

Unless the palm shadows could attack the opponent's vital spots.

Thousand Hammer Technique!

Roc Spreading Wings!

Refining demon!

Talisman Drawing!

Drawing the [Hundred Forms of the Tiger]!

...

The next day, Qing Shui woke up very early and walked toward the river. He was going to have his morning practice there but before he arrived, he could hear the sound of the swinging of swords. After walking further, he saw the lady dancing with the sword at the river bed,

She was still wearing a golden colored pleated dress but Qing Shui knew that it was not the same one she was wearing before

since the spiritual aura on it was different.

The lady had a golden colored longsword in her hands and what had astonished Qing Shui was the glow and the powerful spiritual energy on the golden colored sword which was over three feet in length. It was as if the sword was able to form a Divine Connection.

Mystical Connection Divine Sword !

To think that it was the “Mystical Connection Divine Sword”! At first glance, the name of the sword slipped out from Qing Shui’s mouth. Although the grades of the treasure which he knew of from his previous life was not accurate, this sword was definitely the best one Qing Shui has seen so far.

It was no wonder that this lady could lead Mu Clan to the Sky Penetrating Mountains. This “Mystical Connection Divine Sword” definitely played a huge role.

Another thing was that this Mystical Connection Divine Sword was different from the one Qing Shui knew about. The one he knew of was only seven inches long and was hidden in the body, linked to the owner in the heart. When required, it would release a stream of golden light, locking the enemy and killing them without any notice.

In the world of the nine continents, everything he knew could only act as references. After all, only the things that he has come across whilst working his way through this world were real.

And just then, the lady's longsword flew toward Qing Shui, its sword Qi like a rainbow and its speed was extremely fast. This made Qing Shui tense up. He took a step to the left and then two steps backward, dodging this sword.

The lady's eyes lit up as she darted over, grabbed the Mystical Connection Divine Sword and once again stabbed toward Qing Shui. Each of her sword attacks had an indescribable rhythm, as if they were alive.

They were really connected to her heart.

AST 866 – Arriving At The Sky Penetrating Mountains, The Strength Of Golden Jiao King?

Looking at Sword Qi that shrouded him, Qing Shui raised his speed to its limit. The powerful Cloudmist Steps had many types of steps fused in it. In addition to the Nine Continents Boots that he was wearing on his feet, Qing Shui was still very formidable in speed.

The steps of the woman were agile and graceful like a butterfly, yet as quick as a snake. Her sword technique was also growing swifter. Qing Shui was already pressured in dealing with her. If he had to withstand this, he must retaliate.

He couldn't use his Hidden Weapons. Putting aside the issue of being able to cause injury, they weren't suited for sparring.

He took out the Big Dipper Sword and immediately resisted her advances with the Basic Sword Techniques. When it came to the realm of Sword Techniques, Qing Shui had not seen anyone better than him. Rather than swapping pointers, it was more like they were swapping sword technique pointers.

Neither party used their full strength and they didn't go further than necessary. Although the 'Basic Sword Techniques' was simple, it was most direct without any flashy movements. Even for Qing Shui's current realm, it remained simple and unsophisticated with a strange imposing beauty. It was easy to be neglected for its simplicity.

The woman had only found out how high this young man's sword technique realm actually was along with his speed during their exchange. She only realized now that everything this man knew was top-notch. His cooking skills, sword techniques and drawing.....

“Just what else does he know? What is his strength?”

The woman seemed to have realized that she was wondering about too many things. Why was she wondering so much? But then again, she couldn't stop herself from wondering and she didn't know why either. She merely wanted to know how he could cultivate all these to such a realm.

Perhaps her mind wandered when she was thinking, she seemed to be unaware when Qing Shui's sword stopped at her neck. By the time she snapped back to reality, her Mystical Connection Divine Sword had already cut Qing Shui on his shoulder.

Qing Shui thought that this would be considered over the moment his sword had reached her delicate neck. He didn't expect it to be over this quick either, although it was just a simple spar.

“How sharp. It's simply all-conquering.” Qing Shui took a look at the wound on his shoulder. Blood was gushing out from it. He didn't expect things to turn out this way at all. He wasn't on his guard so this woman managed to stab him very easily.

Qing Shui was dazed. The look in his eyes was a little strange.

Fresh blood stained his entire shoulder crimson very quickly. The woman was startled before she frantically apologized, “I’m so sorry.”

The woman actually came over. She held Qing Shui’s arm, took out medicine and poured some on it. Qing Shui could smell a faint delicate fragrance in the air as the woman approached. It smelled very nice. It was the best fragrance in the world.

“It’s alright, I was the one who didn’t evade.” Qing Shui silently moved a step backwards and pulled his arm out of her grasp.

“I’m really sorry!” The woman had a very serious look on her face and was very apologetic.

“Injuries are unavoidable in sparring. I’m alright, I’ll go clean up the wound,” Qing Shui laughed in a relaxed manner.

“I’ll help you dress it.” The woman offered after hesitating for a moment.

“I can do it myself. There’s blood all over, it’s better you don’t touch.” Qing Shui smiled after he finished his sentence and then made his way behind the big tree that was not too far away.

Qing Shui had declined her good will because he didn’t want to be involved with her. Not even a little. Especially in this kind of situation, he didn’t want to have any physical contact with her.

That was because he knew that this type of woman basically had never experienced any contact with men. Perhaps she had said something like this today because she was apologetic. However, Qing Shui didn't want her to do something like that because he was also afraid. Not only that, this type of woman was especially clingy.

The woman watched Qing Shui's silhouette. This was the first time a man had rejected her and had refused her offer to dress his wound. She didn't know what to feel. Should she rejoice, be happy or be disappointed?

Disappointed? No. She had met a man with some integrity.....

If Qing Shui had known about the thoughts of this woman, he wouldn't know what to think.

He took off his bloody clothes and applied some medicine. Qing Shui had a very special constitution. His speed of recovery was very fast. After simply dressing the wound, he changed his clothes and came out.

When he came out, he saw that the woman was still there in the distance. She seemed to be waiting for him. Qing Shui walked over to her. It was still very early right now. The sparring earlier had lasted only for a little while so he still had to go through his morning practice.

"Is it serious?" The woman asked apologetically. After all, he got stabbed by her before they even entered the Sky Penetrating

Mountains. They would be reaching the Sky Penetrating Mountains very soon so she was actually very worried, in a guilty way.

“I’m fine. Don’t worry. My body recovers very fast. It’ll be completely healed by tonight at the latest. I’m going to practise my fist for a while,” Qing Shui finished his sentence with a smile and walked away to somewhere a little further.

The woman opened her mouth but didn’t say anything. She thought that Qing Shui would return.....

She had done it on purpose, although she felt very apologetic about it.

Otherwise Qing Shui wouldn’t be hurt.

After Qing Shui walked away, his mood grew a little heavy. He didn’t know what attitude he should show her. Accidentally? She should be able to feel the sword on her neck. For someone with that strength, it was impossible for her to be distracted. Even if she was distracted, he would be able to tell from looking.

Although she might have something on her mind at that time, that stab must have been on purpose. She wanted him to return now so she thought of injuring him so that he wouldn’t be able to go to the Sky Penetrating Mountains. After all, this wound normally wouldn’t completely heal in less than a month.

Qing Shui slowly practised his taichi fists at a distance as thoughts kept running through his mind. Should he go alone or go with her? He could only guess at the reason why she had done this on purpose but not the exact reason.

However it was simply impossible for a situation like this to happen for someone with her strength.

The woman watched Qing Shui's silhouette and the slow movements of his fists. She was really distracted earlier but it wasn't to the extent where she would cause an accidental injury. This was a spontaneous decision on her part and she had even subconsciously decided to do it, although it didn't seem to have achieved the end result that she desired.

The woman from Mu Clan sighed before making her way towards the tent.

After Qing Shui returned this time, breakfast had already been prepared. However the taste was as different as heaven and earth compared to last night. In fact, it was actually rather hard to swallow.

"Cough cough. We have been eating this before. Let's all stop behaving like this. Besides, we can't always let Qing Shui cook!" The fourth uncle of the Mu Clan woman, Mu Yiping said gloomily. He also thought that the food tasted very bad.

Since their previous meal was delicious, which was rare for them, the disparity between that and this was simply too great.

Qing Shui also knew now that the Fourth Uncle of that woman from Mu Clan was called Mu Yiping and her other Sixth Uncle was Mu Yiang. Among the elderly men, other than Mu Yiping and Mu Yiang, the others were addressed as Third Uncle, Seventh Uncle and Eighth Uncle. Qing Shui didn't know the name of that woman from Mu Clan, neither did he have any intention of finding out right now.

The two grandmothers weren't directly related to the Mu Clan but had been in the Mu Clan for a hundred years so they were basically no different than the Mu Clan people. The woman from Mu Clan addressed them with Granny. It seemed like they had watched the woman of Mu Clan grow up.

They continued their journey towards the Sky Penetrating Mountains after they packed up. No one other than the woman knew of the incident where Qing Shui was stabbed and no one had realized it so far either. The woman always seemed a little guilty whenever she looked at Qing Shui.

This had even become a little knot in her heart.

She thought that her actions were a little too petty. After all, she had already agreed yet she still did something like this even though her motive wasn't a malicious one.

Qing Shui hadn't had much reaction from the beginning to the end but he had refused to let her dress his wound and this flustered her a little. Despite everything, this was her first time being

rejected by someone.

After two days, the Sky Penetrating Mountains had come into view in the distance. They would arrive in another two hours.

They saw quite a number of people along their way. They were all riding on a flying beasts and looked strong. This had broadened Qing Shui's horizons quite a lot. It seemed like there were really many people coming to the Sky Penetrating Mountain everyday and on top of that, they were all powerful cultivators.

“Let's take a break o the outskirts of the Sky Penetrating Mountains for tonight. We'll go in early tomorrow morning,” the woman suggested to everyone.

Qing Shui saw that there were a lot of tents pitched in the surroundings. It seemed many people had made the same decision too. Looking at the sky, only half of the afternoon had passed. There was still quite some time left before nightfall.

He raised his head to look at the mountains that penetrated the skies. The towering and enormous mountain silhouettes gave people a heavy feeling. Qing Shui had felt the same way when he was at the Giant Beasts Mountains and it deserved to be called dangerous grounds.

“Is your arm alright?” The woman's voice came from Qing Shui's side. She had tried to slow down their journey as much as possible and also ensured that they reached here at this time. This way, they would be able to stay one night in the outskirts of the Sky

Penetrating Mountains.

Qing Shui turned his head around and smiled, “It’s completely healed.”

He rolled his sleeve all the way up to his shoulder and revealed a scar that was only about three inches long. He didn’t want this woman to keep thinking about it so he helped her to eliminate her worries.

Seeing that scar that no longer seemed significant, the woman inwardly breathed a sigh of relief.

“Give me some brief explanations about these Sky Penetrating Mountains!” Qing Shui realized that both of them really didn’t have much to talk about with each other.

“Sure!”

The two of them walked slowly toward the Sky Penetrating Mountains, their walking pace was very slow. Then the woman spoke up. “The dangers in the Sky Penetrating Mountains are hard to predict. Not only are there formidable demonic beasts and poison beasts, the Qi of Xiantian cannot be activated in some places. Then there are also poisonous miasmas, poisonous insects and herbs. All kinds of deadly dangers lurk around here. But a thousand li into the Sky Penetrating Mountains is still relatively safe. Most people hunt for treasures around this area.” The woman provided a brief explanation.

When Qing Shui heard this, he wasn't really bothered about the poisonous things as he wasn't really allergic to any of those. However, he was startled as soon as he heard about how the Qi of Xiantian might not be able to be activated and agreed that this Sky Penetrating Mountains was indeed dangerous. There should be some powerful demonic beasts dwelling in there or some mystical objects.

Mystical objects existed in the World of the Nine Continents. For example, the 'God Slaying Stone' that was classified by grades. Different grades would prevent cultivators or demonic beasts of the same level within a specific range from activating the Qi of Xiantian and dantian energy so that they could only use their physical strength. This was why some special buildings would utilize the suppression of the God Slaying Stone. Every single one of them was a priceless treasure.

Basically most cultivators could only use 1% of their strength when they were unable to activate their Qi of Xiantian or if their dantian was sealed. Some cultivators would even instantly be crippled into an ordinary person.

Other than areas where Qi of Xiantian couldn't be activated, there were also some demonic beasts of Chieftain level. They also possessed mysteriously formidable strength and were very reactive on their territory.

"How far did you manage to go when you all went to the Sky Penetrating Mountains before?" Qing Shui asked after thinking for moment.

“Ten thousand li. That was our limit.” The woman answered Qing Shui.

“Where is that Golden Jiao King roughly located? Will it be further than ten thousand li?” Qing Shui asked with a smile.

The woman gave Qing Shui a weird look before finally answering him, “The Golden Jiao King should be further away than ten thousand li but the people from the Cheng Clan were very unlucky. They bumped into it right around the ten thousand li range.”

AST 867 – Hard To Find the Sky Penetrating Grass, Treasure Beast Treasure Hunting Pigs

When Qing Shui heard the lady's words, he also felt that Cheng Clan was really unlucky. Since they dared to enter deep 100,000 li in, it meant that they were pretty powerful but were just unlucky to have come across the Golden Jiao King.

Sometimes, this was how people were. Everything would be decided in one unlucky event. Therefore, luck was very important. It was not something that could be grasped or seen but yet seemed to exist.

Qing Shui didn't ask why they had gone to the Sky Penetrating Mountains, since it was not something he should be asking. In this area, he had been insisting that things were none of his business or were related to other people's secrets, he wouldn't take the initiative to ask. It was just like now, how he would not ask in detail why the other party had come to the Sky Penetrating Mountains.

“Are you here to look for something in the Sky Penetrating Mountains? Is it something that you are at ease to share? I can see if it's located somewhere I know of,” the lady looked at Qing Shui and spoke softly.

“Of course. I'm here to look for Sky Penetrating Grass which is 5,000 Years or older,” Qing Shui looked at the lady and said slowly.

Hearing Qing Shui's words, the lady was stunned and didn't speak for a long time.

Qing Shui looked at that extremely unnatural expression on her beautiful face and asked, "What's wrong?"

"I can be very sure that there's no Sky Penetrating Grass within 100,000 li. The Sky Penetrating Grass is deeper within the Sky Penetrating Mountains." The lady hesitated for a moment before replying.

Qing Shui was stunned as well. Although he had expected this result, he still felt an indescribable sense of helplessness. It was because if it was not within 100,000 li, it would be really hard for him to get his hands on it.

"Then does Miss know how deep in I would be able to find Sky Penetrating Grass?" Qing Shui thought that since this lady from Mu Clan had came here not less than ten times, she should know something about the place. Even if she hadn't encountered them, she should know something about them. Moreover, there had been people who had gotten their hands on Sky Penetrating Grass from these mountains.

"I'm not very sure but I've heard that someone had found the Sky Penetrating Grass about 300,000 li inside," the lady from Mu Clan hesitated and said.

Qing Shui thought that since there was one near 300,000 li deep, then there might possibly be another. At the same time, it also

meant one thing, which was that there should be the existence of Sky Penetrating Grass from this range onward.

Another thing was that there were people who could enter 300,000 li in, while Mu Clan could only enter 100,000 li in. It might be because Mu Clan had done this for the sake of the future and for safety purposes did not want to take greater risks.

“Thank you. After you guys have completed your mission or have reached the limits where you can go, there’s no need for you to care about me. I’ll go look for the Sky Penetrating Grass. Thank you for bringing me here.” Qing Shui smiled and said.

“With your abilities, if you were to head deeper beyond 100,000 li, chances are that you’ll die. Is the Sky Penetrating Grass more important than your life?” The lady frowned and asked. After all, Dong Clan had entrusted her with the task of taking care of him and even Dong Clan’s Old Master had brought it up himself. It was just that at the beginning, it was only agreed that he would be entering the Sky Penetrating Mountains with Mu Clan and there was no mention that he was going to look for the Sky Penetrating Grass. It was not something she could bring up on her side.

“I’d like to give it a try. Don’t worry, Dong Clan won’t blame you.”

“If I had known that you were here to look for the Sky Penetrating Grass, I’d definitely not have brought you along,” the lady sighed and said.

“I’ll familiarize myself with the environment while I’m with you guys before I enter slightly deeper in. It might not be as dangerous as it’s imagined to be.” Qing Shui seemed as if he was consoling himself.

“Can you not go? Don’t be hoping to be lucky,” the lady spoke through clenched teeth.

“I really need the Sky Penetrating Grass. I’ll be very careful,” Qing Shui hesitated a moment before saying.

This time around, the lady did not say much. She knew that Qing Shui would definitely go.

Very quickly, the two of them returned to the area where their tents were. Not long after, two old men from Mu Clan walked over to Qing Shui.

It was Mu Yiping’s and Mu Yiang’s third and seventh uncles. Their intentions were very clear, which was hoping that Qing Shui would not go deeper into the Sky Penetrating Mountains. They were on quite good terms with Dong Clan’s Old Master, who had specially gone to Mu Clan for Qing Shui. Therefore, these two old men were also hoping to change Qing Shui’s decision about entering deeper into the mountains.

“Sirs, don’t worry. There shouldn’t be any problems.” Qing Shui had not expected the two of them to be persuading him relentlessly. He knew that it was because of Dong Clan or it could also be because of his culinary skills...

For the past few days, Qing Shui had mostly been the one in charge of cooking and everyone's taste buds had been trained up by him, making it hard for them to eat ordinary cooking.

"We knew that this might happen but when the time comes, before you leave, let us know." One of the old men gave it some thought and said.

"Of course, that goes without saying," Qing Shui smiled and said.

...

The next day, after the sun rose up and the fog in the mountains gradually scattered, Qing Shui and the others had entered the Sky Penetrating Mountains. There was only one huge entrance to the valley into the Sky Penetrating Mountains and upon entering everything lit up.

A vast swath of wilderness that stretched beyond the borders of one's vision appeared before his eyes. Out there, there were many mountains in great numbers. This strange feeling gave him a visual impact, as if he was looking at a painting. It was from the viewpoint of a third party.

It was relatively safe within 1,000 li and there were basically no dangers there. Therefore, they sat on their rides and flew past this distance, stopping only after they had reached the 1,000 li point.

This was a transitional point!

Although there didn't seem to be any dangers from here and they had also not come across any dangers within the past 1,000 li, Qing Shui didn't dare to let his guard down. It was because upon entering the Sky Penetrating Mountains, he could sense a tremendous dangerous aura which was very suppressing. If one was not strong enough, the person would definitely not be able to unleash his abilities at full power.

Spiritual suppression!

Amongst the Sky Penetrating Mountains, if one's spirit energy was not strong enough, the further one entered, the more suppressed the person would feel and to the extent that just the suppression alone would weaken one's abilities by a lot. This was the reason why many people could only enter 1,000 or 10,000 li into the mountains. If they were to enter even deeper, they would have the abilities of normal people or feel weak and collapse.

From the 1,000 li mark onward, they would encounter many dangers and more so in the air. Sometimes, there would be a whole flock of demonic beasts passing by and thus it was safer on the ground. It was easy to hide amongst valleys or caves on land.

Within the first 1,000 li, they could still see groups of people but beyond the first 1,000 li, the number of groups around diminished and they might not even come across a single group even when half the day had passed.

“Bloody Vines!” Someone pointed to the midpoint of the cliff walls in the distance and shouted.

Qing Shui looked toward the direction the person was pointing to. It was a blood red colored vine type plant. Amidst the green plants around, it was like a huge blood red colored python and there was a translucent, blood red, fruit on it that was the size of a baby’s fist.

“Haha, not bad. We’re off to a good start. I’ve said that we should take this path and it seems like the decision was right,” the old man who was called Old Eight smiled and said.

“We might have come across a 3,000 Years Bloody Vines Fruit if we were to choose the other routes and not this which is not even 2,000 years of age,” an old man smiled and interrupted.

“Old Seven, are you out to challenge me?” Old Eight asked, infuriated.

The other people didn’t give any response. They were used to such situations and had long been numbed. Even if they were to start fighting, no one else would even furrow their brows.

They only picked that fruit. Qing Shui faintly recalled that the Bloody Vines Fruit could change one’s blood quality, making it more active and increase the user’s talent, abilities and physiques. It was quite a good item and the effects could be accumulated. Just one alone would not bring much impact but the effects would still be very obvious.

There were really a lot of good things within the Sky Penetrating Mountains. However, there were also plenty of dangers around. Even just for the distance which they had travelled, they had already chased off demonic beasts more than ten times. They had all been elementary Martial Saints, some of which were alone, some in a small group and some coming in a horde of over a hundred of them.

However, the people here were strong enough and thus could chase them off easily. If it was a weak group, they would have died many times over. Interests and dangers came in the same ratio and thus the benefits they received were also tremendous.

This was just the beginning. The deeper they went in, the greater the danger and the more powerful the demonic beasts they would encounter. The routes would also be restrictive since there would be weeds that were taller than humans, many of which came with sharp thorns. There were those in a multitude of colors, those which were scarlet and those which were pungent. Therefore, they were only able to fly over them, being careful of any miasma or poisonous creatures like poisonous snakes and worms.

Three days passed by and the group had only entered another 1,000 li deeper. The deeper they went in, the slower their speed. Earlier, they had even pushed back a horde of high level Martial Saint demonic beasts of about 100 in numbers.

This caused the lady from Mu Clan to frown. They had only entered 2,000 li into the Sky Penetrating Mountains. The situation seemed to be a bit different than from the past. By rights, at this

depth, there shouldn't be such powerful demonic beasts.

Thinking that they had only encountered this once, she relaxed her brows and continued to head in, seeming as if she had no targeted destination, yet at the same time, as if she had everything planned out. Her actions which followed made Qing Shui extremely astonished. She let out over ten golden-colored piglets that were about one foot in size.

Treasure Hunting Pigs...

The pigs were about one foot in size, their bodies like diamond and their speed was extremely fast. They darted about in the mountains. Qing Shui had not expected that this lady had such treasures and ten of them. Each of them were very cute and chubby, making one have the urge to hug them.

Treasure Hunting Pigs were treasure beasts and they were not very strong. Their bodies were tough as diamond and both their speed and endurance level were very strong. Their only unique trait was that they could look for treasures and thus the name Treasure Hunting Pigs.

Treasure beasts were unlike mutated beasts and fantastic beasts. An existence like the Treasure Hunting Pigs didn't hold any attacking prowess but their survival abilities were very strong and were the dreams of many people.

Treasure beasts were covered in treasures all over. Take the Treasure Hunting Pig for example, it had a golden-colored pearl in

its body which had a tremendous worth. However, no one would kill a Treasure Hunting Pig to take away its golden-colored pearl since the greatest worth of a Treasure Hunting Pig was its ability to search for treasure.

The lady would be following the direction of the Treasure Hunting Pigs from then on. With over ten of them, they managed to reap great rewards, with most of them being medicinal herbs or wild fruits that were about 3,000 years of age.

However, these were already considered very good at this location. Of course, there were also those which had a greater age but were quite few. In fact, in the first 1,000 li, there were also 3,000 Years or even 5,000 Years medicinal herbs but most of them were not over 3,000 years.

It was really convenient with the Treasure Hunting Pigs. Qing Shui continued to look at the running golden-colored creatures and then at that graceful and poised lady, feeling that she was really blessed with great advantages.

AST 868 – Violent Blood Bear, Finding Another Deity Statue Again

Actually, when had he not been blessed by the heavens? Merely, Qing Shui was feeling slightly envious at the moment. He was truly only a little envious, but that was it.

However, the others did not have such a feeling. Currently, he was already aware of the reason as to why this lady would lead members of Mu Family to the Sky Penetrating Mountains. It was not only due to her being strong and having exceptional talent, it was also because she had more than ten Treasure Hunting Pigs.

Owing to the Treasure Hunting Pigs, their harvest was many times greater than if they didn't have them. The reason she had not let them out earlier was perhaps because there were still other people in the vicinity.

Now that they had travelled over 2000 li into the mountain range, basically no one else could be seen. It would be hard to locate them even if there were others around. The Sky Penetrating Mountains was very large and akin to a maze.

Just like that, everyone split up. Each pair followed a Treasure Hunting Pig. It was agreed that whistles would be used for communication. In addition, the Treasure Hunting Pigs could communicate with one another. Therefore, they weren't afraid of getting lost, only worried that they would be too far away and unable to assist one another in times of danger.

Over twenty people and more than ten Treasure Hunting Pigs. It was almost exactly two people per pig. Due to some carelessness, only Qing Shui and the Mu Family girl remained, as well as a Treasure Hunting Pig.

“Let’s go, we’ll follow it!” said the girl with a faint smile.

“Okay!” replied Qing Shui.

Squeak Squeak!

The cry of the Treasure Hunting Pig was shrill and resounding. It appeared to be sending a message to its comrades, telling them that this particular route was already occupied and for them to head towards other places to hunt.

Originally, it still felt quite lively with over twenty people being together. All of a sudden, only the two of them were left. This made the atmosphere feel a little cold and lonely. It was quiet all around, with only the sound of wind blowing and the occasional roars from beasts. If a person without cultivation was to be here, they would be frightened till their knees went soft.

As time passed by, Qing Shui and the woman followed after the Treasure Hunting Pig as it unceasingly travelled back and forth. All of a sudden, a three metre long demonic beast lunged towards the Treasure Hunting Pig. The Treasure Hunting Pig did not have the slightest reaction however.

Xiu!

The stone that Qing Shui had prepared in his hand shot out, directly piercing the demonic beast's skull. The stone had drawn a bright line of light in the air. This was the result of its speed reaching the limits.

Pu!

The demonic beast had met with a violent death without making a single cry.

The woman looked at Qing Shui as her eyes twitched. With her formidable strength, she was naturally able to see the might of that strike. This long-ranged shooting was an ability that every cultivator knew. However, it was like the disparity between a child and a giant when compared with him.

Exactly how much did he know? If he were to specialize, would he have already achieved the peak now?

“Thank you. Actually, the vitality of the Treasure Hunting Pig is very strong. Biting the Treasure Hunting Pig would only result in the destruction of the demonic beast's teeth.” the girl smiled as she spoke.

Qing Shui smiled. He was also aware of it. However, after seeing the little foot-long pig and a demonic beast being a giant wolf that could almost eat it with a single bite, he had unknowingly used a

hidden weapon to kill the giant wolf.

The giant wolf was only an Early Martial Saint demonic beast. However, Qing Shui had displayed his hidden weapon techniques. There was nothing wrong with that though, since there was no need to hide it from people.

Although the Treasure Hunting Pig did not have any strength of its own, even Early Martial Saint demonic beasts were unable to harm it. This was the reason why they continued to exist till this day.

Squeak Squeak!

Qing Shui looked at the dense forest halfway up the mountain, from where the cries of a Treasure Hunting Pig were ringing. Qing Shui and the woman rushed over to the location of the sounds, since these sounds generally indicated that it had discovered items of a spiritual nature.

Upon reaching their destination, the two of them were astonished for a while. It was a hidden mountain cave. An excitement that was hard to suppress flashed across his face as they arrived at its entrance.

This was because the aura within was too familiar to him. The pressure was much stronger than the outside. Looking at each other, the woman took the lead and entered with Qing Shui following behind her.

A large hall, this was a large hall that gave Qing Shui a familiar feeling. However, there was a lot of dust in here, with even more traces left behind by demonic beasts. With a single look, they found a few flying beasts and three giant bears currently snoring loudly in their sleep.

Although there was a pressure here, it was only present within the great hall. Strong demonic beasts would still be able to live here as they like. These three giant bears were over ten meters long, their gigantic bodies resembled a small mountain.

The body shapes of demonic beasts were unlike that of birds. The wings of birds spanned over half of their body, and they would look very big when they extended their wings. Demonic beasts did not have any wings, but their gigantic bodies shocked people. The terrifying power they had and their immense roars made people feel uneasy.

Perhaps because they smelled the odor of humans, the three giant bears suddenly stood up. Their gigantic eyes flashed red as they looked towards Qing Shui and the woman. The Treasure Hunting Pig had already run off to some unknown place.

Violent Blood Bear!

Their entire body was brown and had blood red eyes. This kind of bear easily became berserk. Once they entered berserk mode, their entire body would turn blood red and their strength would become twofold. Upon being injured or seeing blood, their strength would increase even further.

The Violent Blood Bear had a strength of one to three stars. Within the Sky Penetrating Mountains, everything was abnormal, yet it was also considered normal. Therefore, one should not be shocked to meet with any strong demonic beasts. Just like the Cheng Family, they could only blame themselves for being unlucky

If the three Violent Blood Bears before them were to turn berserk, their strength would multiply, and they would be much more powerful. Although Qing Shui and the woman did not feel threatened, they didn't dare to be careless. At this point, the three giant bears lunged towards them.

Qing Shui held the Violet Gold Divine Shield in his left hand and the Thunder God in his right.

Presently, Qing Shui's base strength was one star, with his defense being slightly more than one and a half stars.

Diamond Qi, Diamond Protection and Diamond Crossing Rivers allowed Qing Shui's strength, defense and speed to double.

The Nature Energy increased his base strength by 60%, Mental State Aakin Tto Tthat Oof Iimmovable Mmountains increased his base strength by 50%, Frenzied Bull's Strength increased his base strength by 30%, the Heavenly Thunder Slash increased his strength by 30%, the Shield Attack increased his strength by 20%, the Heavenly Talisman increased his strength and defense by 50%, the Combination Sword Technique increase his strength by 40%, and the Thunder God doubled his entire strength.

Qing Shui was also holding the Violet Gold Divine Shield, which [increased his base strength by an additional 100%](#). He jumped with a rush and the Violet Gold Divine Shield in his hand suddenly smashed down on the Violent Blood Bear.

(Prady's Note: ((((((1.0+0.6+0.5+0.3)*(1.30))*(1.20))*(1.50))*(1.40))*(2.0)) = 14.41x base strength....)

Bang!

Qing Shui wasn't sure why the mountain cave could endure such strong energy fluctuations. Was it due to the Deity Statue? Perhaps due to the mountain being very large while this cave being very small? It was just like using a needle to poke a small hole in a rock, very hard for this small hole to cave in.

The gigantic Violent Blood Bear was smashed by such an overbearing attack. The Thunder God in his right hand immediately unleashed Heaven Falls and the Earth Rends, aiming towards the gigantic skull of the giant bear who was currently dizzy.

Bang!

Roar!

As the hammer struck down, the gigantic bear was smashed. Blood directly spurted from its head, reaching tens of meters in height. The giant bear roared savagely, but that was merely a

fierce final roar.

Its entire brain was already jolted till it shattered, it would've been weird if it weren't dead.

Compared to Qing Shui, the lady wielded her Spiritual Link Divine Sword skillfully. Every stab would reach the bone. The bear had already entered berserk mode. It appeared even more fierce and savage with blood covering its entire body.

Under the stimulation of blood, the other Violent Blood Bear had already started to berserk, lunging towards the woman. The Violent Blood Bear was a kind of demonic beast that never cowers regardless of the situation. Therefore, if one were to meet a large pack of Violent Blood Bears, there were only two options, either to kill them all or flee.

Qing Shui had basically killed a Violent Blood Bear in a single move. She had previously sensed the huge energy fluctuations within Qin Shui's body. This made her very shocked. She only had her current achievements due to obtaining a saint ranked item, could he possibly be the same?

The woman discovered that ever since she had met this man, the frequency in which she felt shocked was much higher than before. So much so that she had the urge in wanting to understand him, wanting to know how he achieved it. However, she knew that she could not ask, as he definitely had his own treasures. Asking would only lead to suspicion. Furthermore, he definitely wouldn't say it.

Qing Shui had stopped one, while another was killed by the woman. The remaining bear was easily dispatched by the two of them.

Afterwards, the lady took out a medicine bottle and skillfully picked apart the Violent Blood Bears. After retrieving their cores and gall bladders, she poured a bit of the powder on them. Very quickly, the three bears dissolved.

Corpse Dissolving Powder!

Corpse Dissolving Powder was an item that was only effective towards corpses of people and demonic beasts. As long as one still had any signs of life, it would be of no use. This medicinal powder was very strange, and it was refined from the bones and blood of a certain demonic beast. It was relatively valuable as it could not only dissolve corpses, but also able to purify the surroundings.

The Corpse Dissolving Powder was especially important in such a place. Presently for example, they would have to remove the corpses and stench of blood if they wanted to stay in this place for a while. It would easily attract the attention of nearby demonic beasts otherwise. If they weren't careful, that would be truly unfortunate.

At first, Qing Shui was prepared to use his primordial flames to burn the corpses. However, he knew that the woman would definitely have her ways, since she had come here quite a few times.

After cleaning up this place, they went out to take a look. After discovering that there were no problems, Qing Shui headed back. The woman was standing there, appearing to be waiting for him.

“Qing Shui Deity Statue, do you know about the Deity Statue?” the woman asked Qing Shui with a smile.

“I’ve seen it before.” replied Qing Shui affirmatively. Qing Shui felt relieved for a moment. Looks like this wasn’t the first time the lady had seen the Deity Statue. She also had her own stroke of luck. Furthermore, it was most likely related to the Deity Statue.

“These are yours” said the woman as she handed the Violent Blood Bear’s core and gall bladder to him.

“We’ve already agreed that all the items are yours. I’m only here to search for the Sky Penetrating Grass.” Qing Shui shook his head as he refused.

The lady paused for a moment, she then smiled and said, “What about this Deity Statue? Is it mine?”

“Naturally!” replied Qing Shui with a smile.

The lady gently sighed and said, “If there is the Sky Penetrating Grass that you need inside the cave and I also want it, would you take action against me?”

He replied after hesitating, “No!”.

“Really?”

“I won’t!” Qing Shui replied with more certainty this time.

“We’ll split it evenly. If you don’t agree, we’ll leave right now.” The girl said as she smiled towards Qing Shui.

Qing Shui did not know what was on her mind at the moment. After hesitating for a while, he nodded his head and replied, “Let’s open it first and take a look. If you still insist at that time, I’ll split with you.”

“You have that much distrust in me? Do I look like that sort of greedy woman?” the lady replied, appearing to be extremely angry.

AST 869 – Grade Eight Sunstone, The Eighth Portrait Of Beauty

This was the first time that Qing Shui had seen this third kind of expression from this lady. A faint smile, a worried expression, and the previous slight anger. Of these three expressions, the first one was for everyone, while the second and third were for himself.

She was very beautiful regardless of her expression, beautiful to the utmost degree. Qing Shui did not dare to look more and only laughed while turning his head to the side.

“You’re not greedy, but I’m greedy.” Qing Shui said as he shook his head.

“Okay, let’s go and see what’s inside. What a coincidence that we’re actually able to come across a Deity Statue. In so many years, I’ve only come across one before, and that was a long time ago. That occasion changed my life.” said the lady. While she talked, she seemed to have realized something. She had been acting slightly unusually today. She was talking more than usual and did some things that were slightly abnormal. Her mind also seemed to be slightly confused.

He did not know what exactly was happening to her, however, she knew that it was related to the man before her.

Qing Shui smiled and nodded his head and the two of them walked into the inner temple.

The deeper they entered, the greater the pressure!

The two of them could be considered as people who had received great benefits from the Deity Statue. Therefore, both of them had a considerable amount of anticipation about the good things that this Deity Statue would bring to them. Qing Shui truly hoped that this Deity Statue would be able to bring him two stalks of Sky Penetrating Grass.

At that time, he would use the other items to exchange with this lady. Since she was able to say those words previously, that meant that he still had hope. He would not let her suffer a loss.

As the two slowly headed towards the inner hall, the pressure gradually grew stronger and stronger. When Qing Shui saw the familiar gigantic Deity Statue, he had some complicated feelings.

If they did not have the Treasure Hunting Pigs, perhaps it would have been very hard to discover this place. This area was extremely well concealed and was covered in dense vegetation. In the vast and expansive Sky Penetrating Mountains, even if people walked by, it would still be very hard to discover this place. This was because it was impossible to search every inch of land.

Therefore, even though they had not gone very deep into the Sky Penetrating Mountains, those who entered the mountains would most likely search within 1,000 li from the entrance. There were many places to search as there were mountain peaks everywhere. Therefore, the search sites were not only on the ground but also

halfway up the mountain, on the mountain peaks, caves as well as underground.

“Will you do it, or should I?” asked the lady as she smiled towards Qing Shui.

“You go for it!” Qing Shui did not wish to fight with her over it. Furthermore, he wished to see how this lady was going to get the box from underneath the Deity Statue.

“Okay!” the lady replied straightforwardly.

Resisting the pressure, the lady slowly walked towards the Deity Statue. Qing Shui looked at her, knowing that it was impossible for her to use her hand to directly take that box. Therefore, the method she would employ should be similar to his.

The lady resisted the pressure and walked approximately half the distance, then she drew out her Spiritual Link Divine Sword and proceeded to control it, sending it flying towards the box.

Humm Humm!

There was a sharp resounding hum, and he saw the Spiritual Link Divine Sword enter a crevice in the box. A swaying moment then followed. However, a change happened at this very moment.

This was followed by an intensification of the humming noise. The Spiritual Link Divine Sword vibrated even more intensely,

however, the box only vibrated gently yet did not seem to have the slightest movement.

Controlling an object!

The lady's Spiritual Link Divine Sword could leave her body and be controlled with her mind, just like Qing Shui's hidden weapons. However, at present, the results were unclear. Despite this, he could tell that her sword was very strong, otherwise, it would have been destroyed by the pressure.

Qing Shui did not know if she had used this method to retrieve the her previous box. However, this time he had felt that it would be difficult for her to obtain it. Mental strength was very mysterious and its strength was very weak, similar to Qing Shui's Hidden Weapons. Qing Shui mainly used his hand to unleash his hidden attacks and only used his mental strength to change their directions.

The lady had similarly used her hand to launch the Spiritual Link Divine Sword and then she tried to use her mental strength to drag it back. This wasn't impossible, but the difficulty was high. The Spiritual Link Divine Sword could be considered a treasure, but he still didn't know if she could achieve it.

After trying to pull it out twice and being met with failure both times, she did not continue trying. Instead, she sent out an extremely sweet sounding clear whistle and the Treasure Hunting Pig quickly came running over. What happened in the next moment left Qing Shui dumbfounded.

This golden colored Treasure Hunting Pig was actually able to ignore the pressure...

Its plump little body ran straight for the Deity Statue and it used its head to lift the box up. At this moment, the lady used her mental strength to control the Spiritual Link Divine Sword, which in turn controlled the path of the box. Just like that, the box slowly arrived by the lady's side.

Don't look down on this Treasure Hunting Pig for being only a foot long. Its entire body was tough like diamonds. Although it wasn't powerful, its defensive capabilities were shocking. Furthermore, it had great strength and an even more astonishing stamina and its survival capabilities were extremely impressive.

Just like that, the lady walked over to him with the box in one hand. With a faint smile on her face, she looked at Qing Shui who stood somewhat close. The lady gently sashayed as she walked. Her golden phoenix dress was unspeakably moving and her beautiful eyes were akin to the limpid autumn waters. Her exquisite nose was akin to jade.

"Let's see what's inside this box. It could be the Sky Penetrating Grass that you want." said the lady towards Qing Shui with a light smile.

Qing Shui smiled but did not say anything.

Walking out of the great hall, the girl used her Spiritual Link

Divine Sword to pry the box open. The box was not large, and there were only a few things within it. A book, a painting and a blood red gemstone that looked extremely powerful. Standing by the side, Qing Shui could clearly feel the spiritual energy fluctuations on the gem's surface. The gem seemed to hold some kind of berserk power.

Other than those items, there was also foot long stalk of a mysterious medicinal plant.

With a single look, he could tell that it was the Sky Penetrating Grass. Its entire stalk was translucent like jade and rainbow colors swirled on its surface. The grass radiated a power Spiritual Qi. From its Spiritual Qi, Qing Shui was able to confirm that it was definitely over 5,000 years old. Although this grass was only a foot long, it gave people the sensation that it was especially tall and straight. At the tip of its stalk were a few star-like specks of snow white silver grains that looked extremely splendid and magnificent.

Sky Penetrating Grass, this was the Sky Penetrating Grass!

The lady first picked up the painting. Qing Shui knew that it was a Portrait of Beauty, and it was the eighth one he has seen.

The lady slowly opened it before gawking. Immediately, she looked oddly at Qing Shui, before passing it over to him and asking, "Why is there a painting of your wife here?"

Qing Shui gawked and took a look. This was too coincidental...

The woman in the painting had her hair bunned up and her black brows painted a certain gentleness. Her countenance was as radiant as snow reflected on clouds of sunset. Despite lacking makeup, she was as beautiful as the Goddess of Mount Ba and her beautiful eyes looked like ice on a winter day.

Wasn't this the lady in the crystal coffin? This was too coincidental. He had just drawn her in the Azure Cloud Pavilion and now the genuine painting had appeared... It had to be said that in regards to drawing skills, Qing Shui was far too inferior in comparison. In a single painting, the artist was able to make it difficult for people to shift their gaze. Qing Shui looked at the painting of this woman and stared at those bone-chillingly cold matching beautiful pupils. They were beautiful, akin to ice and snow, pure but cold to the bone.

When Qing Shui thought about the matter that happened between them, he felt a burst of bitterness. It was an indescribable feeling. Looking at the painting again, a complicated expression hung on his face.

The Mu Family girl stood at the side and looked at the absentminded Qing Shui. She felt that this man had become more and more mysterious. Why would the box of the Deity Statue have a painting of his wife?

Although the one he had painted was incomparable to this, the copy he had painted would also be able to fetch an astronomical price. All of this made her feel bewildered.

How does one explain this? Could it be that this man had hidden this painting here?

Only Qing Shui knew the reason. This was a Portrait of Beauty. That woman being one of the Portraits of Beauty was not a strange at all. However, it just so happened that this was too coincidental. Casually, he placed the painting into the Realm of Violet Jade Immortal. Since this lady had misunderstood, he would let her continue to misunderstand.

“Grade Eight Sunstone, increases one’s base strength by 200%.” The lady took out the high purity blood red stone.

“For you!” said the lady as she threw the stone at Qing Shui.

Qing Shui did not understand why he was giving this stone to her so he looked at her perplexedly.

“It looks like this Deity Statue and you are brought together by fate. First, it has a painting of your wife. This stone is the same as the one I’ve brought. Since I can only use one, this one is for you. The one you’re currently carrying should be the Black Divine Stone(black treasured stone). In the future, I’ll find a top-notch forging master to forge it into a weapon for you. Or you can just wear it. My weapon can’t be inlaid.” The lady’s pleasant voice rang out.

Qing Shui looked at the divine stone that looked like a sunstone to him. The red agate in this world might not have the same effect, and it might not even be called a red agate.

“Earth grade peak combat technique ‘Raging Blow’, suitable for hammers... this is also for you, take it!” the girl exclaimed again as she tossed the book towards him. At this moment, she was actually really depressed. The items within this Deity Statue box seemed unexpectedly be tailored for this man.

Actually, she had been stunned from the start by that painting. This Deity Statue gave her a feeling that these were left for him by his woman...

Especially the last item, the Sky Penetrating Grass.

He had come here specifically to find the Sky Penetrating Grass...

“For you!” Standing up, the girl handed the Sky Penetrating Grass to Qing Shui. Coming to the Sky Penetrating Mountains to search for treasures and finding the Deity Statue, she had felt that she had not come here for naught. Thinking back on the previous time she had been here, not only did she obtained martial arts manuals, she had also obtained the Spiritual Link Divine Sword, the sacred item ‘Holy Bracelet’ and some mysterious medical pills and a grade eight sunstone...

This time around, if she were to obtain the Sky Penetrating Grass, it would be considered a huge harvest, and an absolutely huge one at that. This kind of heavenly treasure was truly too hard to come across. She honestly wished to keep it for herself and perhaps this grass was originally hers since she found it first. However, despite this she still handed to Qing Shui for some

curious reason.

The Deity Statue this time was comparatively inferior. Why would it contain a painting of a woman? The martial arts manual were also inferior, they were not even at the heaven grade. Only the Sky Penetrating Grass was a good item. However, this man had come here just for the Sky Penetrating Grass. She had felt all along that they should divide the spoils equally and the man came here just for the grass. In the end, the one who drew the short end of the stick was her. Furthermore, this man seemed to be very mysterious to her. Perhaps this could be considered a gigantic opportunity for her!

Feeling more and more depressed, when she compared this feeling to her previous excitement, the disparity made her feel like vomiting blood.

Qing Shui truly had never thought that this lady would hand over all these items to him. Other than the Eighth Portrait of Beauty, he placed the other four items into the Realm of Violet Jade Immortal. These items were the Grade Eight Sunstone in his hand, the earth grade peak combat technique and the Sky Penetrating Grass that the girl was currently handing over to him.

“Take it. Your luck today is truly good.” Although the lady was depressed, she still happily handed the grass to Qing Shui. Regarding this man, there wasn’t any like or dislike, only an intense curiosity.

“I can’t obtain such huge benefits for free. These few things are priceless. I’ll make an exchange.” Qing Shui did not immediately

take the Sky Penetrating Grass offered to him, as he did not like to owe others.

“As long as you agree not to go to the deeper regions of the Sky Penetrating Mountains, all of these will be the reward for your agreement, is that okay?” thinking about it, the girl replied him with a smile.

AST 870 – Formidable ‘Raging Blow’

Qing Shui remained silent and didn't look at the lady. She had already come over next to him. If he did not respond, he felt that he would be unable to accept it.

“Look, we've already found one stalk. Is that not enough?” asked the lady as she faintly knitted her black brows. Even when she was frowning, she maintained an air of elegance.

“I need at least one more stalk.” replied Qing Shui with a bitter laugh, as he looked towards the lady.

“Look, we found a stalk from the Deity Statue. Let's search some more. There might be other Deity Statues, right?” the lady tried to console Qing Shui.

He knew that the lady was trying to dissuade him from entering the depths of the Sky Penetrating Mountains alone. Deity Statues were not at all easy to chance upon. Finding one today was already an enormous stroke of luck.

“Thank you, but nothing will happen to me.” Qing Shui still did not accept the Sky Penetrating Grass from her, and instead passed her the “Raging Blow” and Sunstone.

“What's the meaning of this? Those are for you. Keep them. Although I won't prevent you from going, you should think over it clearly. You're not an impulsive person.” Sighing, the lady took a step forward, stuffing the Sky Penetrating Grass in his hand before

walking toward the exit.

Qing Shui hesitated for a while before keeping the items in the Realm Of The Violet Jade Immortal. Following her out of the inner hall, he saw the lady standing at the cave entrance. As if nothing had just happened, she said, “Let’s go to another place to search. There just might be Sky Penetrating Grass there.”

“Wait, here’s something for you.” Qing Shui hurriedly shouted towards her. These items were too precious, and he couldn’t bear taking them for free. He had to compensate her, so that he wouldn’t owe her, or at least owe her somewhat less.

The lady smiled as she looked at Qing Shui and replied, “It’s alright. There’s no need to be so courteous. Travelling here together, I can consider you half a friend. Treat this as me helping you this time.”

“If you don’t accept, I’ll just return those items to you,” said Qing Shui softly.

This sentence forced her to have no choice but to nod her head.

Qing Shui had already made preparations for this the previous night. Therefore, he directly threw an Interspatial Silk Sachet over to her. “It’s inside. However it’s best if you see it later. There’s a piece of paper inside that has everything already written down.”

“Okay, no problem!” replied the lady as she kept the Interspatial

Silk Sachet. Although she did not know what he had given her, she felt that it was incomparable to the items from the Deity Statue. Therefore, Qing Shui had asked her to open it later.

When they exited the cave, it was already quite late. Hearing the whistles in the distance, Qing Shui, the lady, and the Treasure Hunting Pig rapidly headed to the gathering point. Qing Shui looked at the skies. As they were around the mountainside, the sun seemed to set exceptionally early. Since the surroundings were all tall mountains, the valley had long periods of darkness.

When they arrived, everyone was already present. Furthermore, there were two freshly killed wild mountain goats. Although this place was very dangerous, there were still some wild animals. Under this kind of pressure, most wild animals were not affected. Pressure was a thing that the more one could resist, the more one felt. Perhaps it could be said that the pressure here was a sort of intangible intimidation.

Regardless of how dangerous a place was, there would always be an uncountable number of low grade demonic beasts and wild animals. They were the lowest on the food chain, but the most numerous, as this was the only way for them to continue existing.

Making food was already a habit for Qing Shui and he would do it at least once a day. Within this period of time, he had obtained some ordinary spices from the mountains and taught the others how to use the spices. This made those old freaks start to love making food. Although they were far from Qing Shui's cooking skill, they were already able to create a flavor that made them slightly emotional...

Roasted lamb and stewed lamb soup. The meat was tender and soft, with a good taste. The roasted lamb was golden yellow in colour, and neatly arranged on a tray. The meat was flaky and soft, oily and textured, with a fragrant smell. It was extremely delicious...

This was a platform halfway up a mountain. The view was extremely good, and the air was fresh. Standing here, one would feel great. Pitching their tents up and finishing up their food, a few old men started to compete with each other over who had found the most items.

Qing Shui returned to his own tent, as it was about time for him to enter the Realm of the Violet Jade Immortal to train.

Upon entering the Realm of Violet Jade Immortal, he looked at the Eighth Portrait of Beauty on the ground. It was opened up, the cold and indifferent gaze of the woman in the painting staring at Qing Shui.

Sighing, Qing Shui picked the painting up and hanged it on the Magnificent Mountains and Rivers Screen. Eight portraits of Beauty were hung, mutually contrasting with one another, dazing Qing Shui for a moment as he looked at them.

Sunstone, a Grade Eight Sunstone that increased one's base strength by 200%. It was not the slightest bit inferior to the Violet Gold Divine Shield, The main benefits of the Violent Gold Divine Shield were its few supplementary abilities, or else it would be too

inferior to this glorious Sunstone.

It was a pity that he had already inlaid the black gemstone and did not have the ability to inlay more gemstones now. Perhaps the Pentacolor Art of Forging would allow the usage of more gemstones!

Subsequently, Qing Shui took out the Peak Earth Grade combat technique, “Raging Blow”. He never had any prejudice towards the grade of the combat technique. As a person who was able to master the Basic Sword Techniques up to the Early Heaven Grade, he would not be overly focused on the grade of a combat technique.

Combat techniques were differentiated into Houtian, Xiantian, Legend and Divine grades. Within the Xiantian and Legend grades was the Earth grade, and the “Raging Blow” was of this grade. Although most people would call this a divine technique, experts would treat this as something of little value.

There were four stages within each grade of combat technique: Heaven, Earth, Xuan and Huang. Heaven was the highest and Huang was the lowest. The “Raging Blow” was generously classified as being in between Xiantian and Legend. To be more specific, it was a Heaven Stage combat technique of Xiantian grade.

Some combat techniques were slightly special, making them stronger than the Xiantian grade but far inferior to the Legend grade. Hence, some people deemed it as an Earth grade, and it was gradually recognized by that name.

Qing Shui slowly opened the Raging Blow. At first look, he already liked its name. Upon opening it up, he saw only one move. This meant that the Raging Blow was just a single hammer move.

Qing Shui carefully inspected this move and discovered its difference from other hammer moves. Originally, he had felt that this hammer move that had appeared in the box of the Deity Statue was slightly unusual. Upon seeing it now, he discovered the mysteriousness within.

The Raging Blow wasn't the name of some hammer technique. This technique had similarities to some of Qing Shui's hammer techniques like the Heaven Shaking Strike, Heaven Falls and Earth Rends, Jolting Heaven Strike and his other hammer techniques with the greatest killing power.

However, there was something slightly different about this. Qing Shui stared at the Raging Blow and, unknowingly, his mind started sinking into it. Even the aura of his subconscious mind started to have a subtle change.

Suddenly, Qing Shui clenched his right hand, his left foot slightly moving forward, and smashed his right fist forward. This fist looked extremely awkward, but produced a surprising feeling when it was executed.

That was the feeling of power, the special feeling of violence!

Raging Blow!

So that's how it is!

At this time, Qing Shui was very excited, as he had discovered that the power of this fist had combined all the hammer techniques he had known. The Heaven Shaking Strike, Heaven Falls, Earth Rends, Jolting Heaven Strike, and the Mountain Splitting Strike were all combined together. However, although the current level of fusion was minimal, this kind of force still had 50% more might than any single technique.

“That strong?”

Qing Shui felt simply incredulous. The Raging Blow was akin to a Divine technique to him. With just a small amount of training, it was already much stronger than the Basic Sword Techniques that he had trained for so long.

Qing Shui did not quite understand. The progress of his Basic Sword Techniques was ordinarily quite slow, but he felt that it seemed to have no end. In principle, that was probably true, but a human's potential and life span were both limited, so he did not know how many moves he could combine together.

This hammer technique, Raging Blow, was simply like sweet rain after a drought for him, causing Qing Shui to enter a feverish and fanatical state that he was unable to stop.

Displaying this move over and over again, the speed at which Qing Shui unleashed the strike gradually grew quicker and quicker. The strength of the fist also seemingly increased slowly,

before he started to launch the fist from different angles.

Qing Shui knew that he had replaced the hammer with his fist as he displayed the strike. The flowing feeling of water was akin to entering a dream, and it seemed that he could not stop. It was like rocking on the the sharp edge of a wave. He didn't want to stop and if he did, it would feel like vomiting blood.

An unknown amount of time passed before Qing Shui slowly stopped, just like an intense fire burning out. He proceeded to immediately lie down on the ground and sleep. He had overdrawn his spirit, and the Yin Yang Image unexpectedly had not replenished the consumption, causing his spiritual energy to show signs of collapse.

When Qing Shui awoke, he did not know how much time had passed. He had already recovered, with his spirit full. He had originally thought of eating some pills to recover, but he was not facing an enemy at this time, so resting immediately would have great benefits for his body.

Standing up, he calmed himself down before clenching his right hand suddenly and sending out a fist. The fist still looked awkward, but it produced a feeling of stealing the work of a heavenly craftsman!

The great art conceals itself!

Qing Shui recalled the feeling he had gotten when he had launched the fist. He previously felt as if the blood in his body had

instantly churned and boiled. The gigantic power that suddenly rose up made him feel as if in that instant, his entire body had an energy that was unable to be completely used.

Raging Blow!

However, this strike seemed to be especially wasteful in its consumption of spiritual energy. The most important point was that the move was a little slow. An expert would feel that it would be slightly too easy to dodge, and this might be the reason why it could not become a Legend Grade combat technique!

Medicinal pills and martial arts were the fastest ways to increase one's combat capabilities and power. This definitely applied to the current Qing Shui. The Raging Blow allowed his normal attack to increase by 50% in power. This extra 50% was calculated after all this power-ups!

The previous training wasn't comprehension but something that was even better. The improvements he made could be seen as a humongous leap. This allowed him to master the Raging Blow to a pretty high level in such a short period of time.

Time to make something to eat, because he was famished.

While Qing Shui was training in the Realm of the Violet Jade Immortal, in another tent, a lady was currently sitting in a daze. She stared blankly at the items on the table. There were many things like the Peach of Immortality, Five Elements Fruit, Vermillion Fruit and many medicinal pills and even wine. All of

these items were incomparably precious, especially those mysterious pills...

Who exactly is he?. The lady sunk into a deep thought. People were just inherently like that. Although curiosity killed the cat, people would still be unable to resist and wanted to know more and satisfy their curious hearts.

The lady knew that she had never felt anything like this before. In the past, if others wanted to talk to her, she did not have the mood to listen, much less having her curiosity piqued. However, the current her did not know what this feeling was.

Perhaps the two of them were the same type of people, and that was why they were so close...

The lady shook her head and kept all the things on the table. The value of these items far exceeded the value of the Sky Penetrating Grass, especially those few mysterious pills that were important to her.

Thinking of the moment he had insisted on giving them to her, she started laughing!

AST 871 – A Girl, Sacred Land: Lotus Realm, Acknowledging A Master

Qing Shui took a look at the Sky Penetrating Grass again. This thing was rather valuable to Qing Shui. If he had two stalks now he could try refining the Ren Meridian Strengthening Pellet and the Du Meridian Strengthening Pellet. He only had one stalk now, thus he did not plan to refine either of them. 300 thousand kilometres, even 500 thousand or 1 million kilometres, Qing Shui would take the risk just to try to search for it.

Suddenly Qing Shui felt that his heart was faintly in pain. This was a strange feeling. He had rarely felt this sensation. Perhaps it could be said that every since he got slightly more powerful, this situation stopped appearing.

.....

While Qing Shui was feeling slight pain in his heart, in a far place within the Greencloud continent, Huoyun Liuli had given birth to a girl. The little lass opened her eyes and saw her mother, then Huoyun Liuli saw that her daughter quickly fell asleep

With a smile on her face, she too proceeded to sleep.

There wasn't any difference between a boy and a girl. The most important thing was that this was the child between her and Qing Shui. This child came quite late, which made Huoyun Liuli especially treasure her. It wasn't to say that if she came earlier she wouldn't treasure her, it was just that it was so difficult for her to

come to this world...

Canghai Mingyue, Qing Yi and Mingyue Gelou were all waiting here. When Huoyun Liu-Li started sleeping, the little lass had opened her eyes and looked bewilderedly at her surroundings. After crying a few times with all her might, she proceeded to immediately go to sleep.

“To think that Liu-Li was worried that her child would be ugly. Look at that little lass’s tender and soft skin, it’s just like Liu-Lis, how beautiful.”said Canghai Mingyue as she looked towards Mingyue Gelou with a smile.

“She’s just saying it. How could the child of her and Qing Shui be ugly.” replied Mingyue Gelou with a smile, as she looking at the little child happily.

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Sacred Land: Lotus Realm!

This was a dreamy and illusionary like world; it gave a feeling that everything was not truly real. There was a lot of water here. Furthermore, there was ample “Spiritual Qi” in the water. Dense and numerous huge lotus flowers filled the surface of the water.

There were also many bamboo houses in the water. Between those houses were walkways made of bamboo. The houses constructed out of bamboo made it look refined and graceful,

without a feeling of it being luxurious, however it gave a flavor of being detached from the mundane world.

There were many mountains here, with lots of water and many bamboo forests. It could be considered as having mountains on one side and water on the other.

Bamboo!

The bamboo signified moral integrity. The people living here might have received the influence from the aura of the bamboo. A large majority of the people here exhibited the temperament of the bamboo. The Lotus Realm was a sacred place, and all the people here were unblemished women.

At this time the lotus peak was full of people, and they were people of the Lotus Realm. There weren't many people in the Lotus Realm, however each and every one of them were all elites. Most of them had rarely walked in the World of the Nine Continents, however many great families and powers all knew about the existence of this great power.

At the top of the lotus peak stood an extremely eye-catchingly gigantic lotus platform. As white as snow and translucent like jade, it was not large, however silvery light twisted around its surface, while it radiated a mysterious energy.

“Today's the day our Lotus Realm holds the once-a-century owner recognition of the Lotus Platform. Any disciples whose strength has reached Martial Saint peak stage can participate. As

long as the Lotus Platform recognizes any one of you as its owner, that person would become the next Lotus Realm leader.” said an old woman slowly, as she walked out with golden revolving crutch.

She was the previous leader of the Lotus Realm, and had continued for 4 terms. Being the leader for four hundred years, it was time she retired and become an elder.

“What if no one succeeds this time?” asked a youthful lady doubtfully.

“There’s no need to worry. The Lotus platform would choose the person that is most suitable to become the next leader of the Lotus Realm. Once it recognizes its owner, the benefits that come with it would be enormous. The inheritance of the Lotus would let you all become peak experts in a short time. This time it had accumulated for 3 hundred years. Okay, let’s begin. We’ll go according to the number given to you. Come up one by one, there’s no difference in being earlier or later. There’s no need to worry. As long as you’re compatible, even if you get the last number, it would still choose you.” replied the old woman before sweeping across all the people present with her eyes.

“Number one!”

.....

Di Chen and her master stood at a place not far from here. Ever since she came here, Di Chen had been incomparably shocked. There were a lot of experts here. Currently she was already an

early Martial Saint, however she was the most ordinary member here.

The Lotus Realm was splitted into tens of branches. For example, aside from the branch where Di Chen's master was in, there were 11 other similar ones. The Lotus Realm leader was the result of the competition between these 12 branches. The person who had created the Lotus Realm had set up this unchangeable rule for the sake of maintaining the strength of the Lotus Realm. Thus, the Lotus platform would choose the person with the best and most suitable talent for attaining the inheritance.

Only through competitions would it be able to guarantee that every Lotus Realm leader would be the most outstanding. After so many years, many rules had changed, however this one had never changed at all. As the Lotus Realm was for unblemished women, if one was married, one had to leave the Lotus Realm.

There were many women from the Lotus Realm that had married and gave birth. Although they were no longer people of the Lotus Realm, if the Lotus Realm were to have any problem, these people would not watch by the sidelines. Due to the fact that everyone from the Lotus Realm being beautiful women of the standard where only one could be found in a thousand miles, those who got married held great influence in the strong powers they married into, especially their men.

A large majority of the women who stepped into the platform had flowery good looks, with exquisite and beautiful curves. However as one went up, one went down. The Lotus platform still did not have any reaction. This was a sacred land, and the Lotus

platform only opens once every hundred years, therefore wanting to have a chance to try on normal occasions were naught.

Everyone could only receive the Lotus inheritance once, and every Lotus inheritance would last at least a hundred years. Being able to absorb how much of it would depend on the aptitude of the person.

“Number 121!”

Di Chen looked at the sign in her hand. She had originally assumed that there would be people who would receive the inheritance very quickly. However now it was number 121 and there still wasn't anyone that had successfully get the Lotus platform to recognize themselves as the owner.

She was number 166, and it seemed to be the last number. She did not mind, however she got a feeling that this Lotus platform had a special kind of attractiveness to her.

“Number 142!”

The girl called out wore a white dress and had a cold and detached expression. When she stood on the Lotus platform, a faint white glow lighted up for not even a breath's worth of time before dimming down.

“Looks like the Lotus Realm leader this time would be obtained by the people of Chao Yang Xuan.” said a girl who seemed very

unwilling.

“Although senior sister Ding isn’t very special, she’s very strong. If she is able to receive the Lotus inheritance, We would no longer be able to catch up to her strength anymore.” said a woman with a shallow smile.

“I hope that there would be a person more suitable than her!”

“The people remaining are getting lesser and lesser. That’s hard!”

.....

However this had already made many people turn feverish. After all, the people that had went up before did not even cause any reaction at all. After this girl walked down, the people behind continued the process.

There was still not a slightest bit of reaction.

“Number 158!”

This time the woman who walked up looked to be slightly older. This was a curvy matured woman, her seductiveness having a distinct difference from the other women.

Upon seeing this woman who seductive and bewitching, many

people had ugly expressions.

“It’s said that she’s about to wed someone. What’s the point of coming here to become the Lotus Realm leader. What’s more if this vixen were to be selected, then the heavens are truly blind.”

When the person had just said the blind word, the Lotus platform flashed with an every brighter glow, making the woman who had just spoke out cover her mouth.

“Did I see wrongly!”

“No, you saw correctly. Elder sister Mei is more suitable than senior sister Ding. This time it looks like you’ve hit a concrete wall. This eye piercing glow is stronger by many times compared to senior sister Ding’s.” said a seductive woman from another branch immediately, with thick despise in her eyes.

Her word was akin to a slap to the woman who had spoken up previously.

“Elder sister Mei is not only mature and beautiful, her talent is outstanding.”

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The voices of praise grew more and more, with people eager to let their voices be heard by the seductive woman.

At a separate place within the place where few hundred ladies had gathered, a woman who had a look of contempt on her face and was similarly dressed seductively said, “These people are in fact more shameless than me. Once they saw that elder sister Mei was able to become the next leader, they started to say words of praises without restraint, while they won’t do such thing normally.”

“They would scold us on a daily basis. Why would they talk good things about us?” said another woman with a mocking laugh.

“Let them scold. In any case what we train in is dual cultivation. Even our ancestors had never forbid from not finding men. They’re just opinionated, and want to slander us.”

“When elder sister Mei becomes the next Lotus Realm leader, she definitely has to beat them down.”

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“Number 163!”

“Number 164!”

As of now many people basically had already determined that the next leader would be that seductive woman.

“Number 166!”

When Di Chen’s number was called, she nodded her head towards her master before walking to the Lotus platform. She felt that the Lotus platform seemed to be summoning her.

“This is Martial Aunt Jiwu’s sole disciple. How beautiful!” upon seeing Di Chen walk out, a woman happily said.

“You’re right. There’re quite a number of beautiful ladies in our Lotus Realm, however I’ve always felt that she’s the most beautiful.” added a woman with long bangs enviously.

“Now I wish that she become the next leader of our Lotus Realm.” said a woman who was slightly older than the rest.

“Being beautiful doesn’t equate to being suitable. However I also hope so, as I feel that anyone would be better than that seductress.”

Soon this place was filled with lively discussions, as these people were clearly not at peace with that seductive woman.

Di Chen did not walk fast, however the transcendent aura she radiated gave an indescribable feeling to the surrounding people. It wasn’t envy, as it had already exceeded their boundaries from envy. There was some envy, however, jealousy was not worth mentioning...

Many old people of the older generation and even the previous Lotus Realm Leader stared at Di Chen with with interest in their eyes: “Such a good Goddess Jade Bone Structure.”

Di Chen slowly walked up the Lotus Platform . There wasn't the slightest reaction. She was the last person, and unexpectedly there were at least 80% of the people below that hoped that this beautiful woman would become the next Lotus Realm leader.

After a breath's worth of time, the Lotus Platform still had no reaction. The people below were very quiet, with many people holding in their anticipation. Seeing that there was no reaction, Di Chen turned around and walked down.

Even the previous Lotus Realm leader could not resist and sighed, as if she felt exceptional depressed.

Just as Di Chen had already taken a step of the Lotus platform, the platform suddenly started to fill with silvery light. A bright and eye piercing glow immediately enveloped Di Chen within it...

AST 872 – Lotus Inheritance, Di Chen

The sudden resplendent silvery light momentarily made the surrounding people sluggish. Such an intense halo. The brighter the halo signified the better one's innate talent was, and the suitability for training. One's accomplishments in the future would also be greater.

Although Di Chen was enveloped within the light, her mind was very clear. An enormous and exquisite energy radiated from the Lotus Platform and flowed into her body. Being recognized as the owner of the Lotus Platform Was only a kind of qualification, the true inheritance wasn't here.

Only by passing this Lotus Platform, which was indicated by the halo of light, would one be able to obtain the true inheritance. The stronger the light, the more qualified an individual was.

However, they never imagined that Di Chen would unexpectedly obtained this energy from the Lotus Platform. Furthermore, this energy was very strong and a few old people had already discovered that Di Chen's strength was increasing frantically.

Although her strength had increased at a rapid pace, there wasn't any hint of violence detected. It was the purest kind of energy and it could directly assimilate into her body. This made everyone present thoroughly stupefied.

The Lotus platform was a treasure from the Lotus Realm but it was unable to be moved. It's considered a symbol of the Lotus

Realm, but there had never been anyone who could obtain power from it.

Actually, it was recorded in ancient texts within the Lotus Realm that the Lotus Platform was a spiritual item. If it truly recognizes an owner, that individual would definitely gain great benefits. Those benefits might even be better than the Lotus inheritance!

Di Chen's emotions were in a mess. She could only feel her strength rapidly increasing, so much that she couldn't even tell how much her strength had risen. However, she knew that this power exceeded her own by far too much.

At the beginning, she felt slightly flustered because being a cultivator, she knew that an overly fast increase in one's strength wasn't a good thing. Mingyue Gelou was a perfect example of this. For one's cultivation to bear fruit, every level had to be built properly. Only with solid foundations could one reach loftier heights.

However, she quickly discovered that this energy was very special. Although there was a huge amount, it was very easy to absorb and was docile like water. The energy immediately circulated and was quickly absorbed and altering every part of her body.

Most crucially, she didn't need to do anything. Within the light, she was unable to sense what was happening outside. At the same time, those on the outside could only sense the massive spiritual energy fluctuations within the white light.

The Lotus Realm's old female master was shocked but also ecstatic. She was reaching the end of her lifespan. Although the Lotus platform had recognized an owner and there would be someone taking over to lead the Lotus Realm, she was still very unassured. Even with the assistance of the elders, she still couldn't feel at ease. The Lotus Realm's leader had to be dignified, moral and have top notch inner qualities. Furthermore, the leader's cultivation needed to shock people or at the very least, their aptitude needed to be perfect.

Although the Lotus Realm was a Sacred Land and very strong, there were powers that were similar in strength with the Lotus Realm. Therefore, they couldn't be free of worries, internal strife and foreign aggression.

As time slowly ticked by, Di Chen's master looked at her disciple who was within that silvery light on the Lotus platform. She felt happiness within her heart but also felt an indescribable feeling, as though she had let down Di Chen. However, when she remembered that Di Chen would need to possess formidable strength for her path ahead, she felt that the current circumstances were good enough.

After persisting for almost an incense stick's worth of time, the light started to gradually rescinded and Di Chen's figure gradually became distinct. When Di Chen appeared in front of everyone once again, all of them were stupefied.

Beautiful, previously Di Chen was already exceedingly beautiful. However, there was now an additional immortal aura around her.

This aura gave off a special feeling, causing people to forget to even breathe.

This was due to the effects of the Lotus Platform. Her aura gave off the feeling of an immortal lotus. This was the genuine false immortal. As no one believed that there were true immortals, she appeared to be a false immortal that had descended from Heaven.

“I announce that Di Chen will be the 198th generation leader of our Lotus Realm!”

At this moment the old lady walked up and announced. There wasn't a single person who had a surprised expression. Almost everyone appeared to be happy. Of course there were those that were unhappy, including that seductive woman.

The most unhappy person would be her. If Di Chen hadn't appeared, she would definitely have become the leader of the Lotus Realm. Among her generation, regardless of intelligence, appearance and cultivation, even though she wasn't the strongest in all aspects, overall she was definitely ranked in the top five. However, Di Chen's appearance forcibly pushed her out of the running and just like that, an enormous opportunity for her was lost.

Her gaze was filled with bitter resentment as stared at the goddess-like woman on the platform, incomparable hatred manifesting within her heart.

Di Chen's gaze, intentionally or otherwise, looked toward that

seductive woman. The previous surrounding aura clearly entered her mind, she could roughly gauge what the others were thinking from their emotion fluctuations.

This was a strange feeling. Furthermore, the strength of the Xiantian Qi circulating in her body made her feel that she could perhaps defeat everyone present. This was the feeling of true power.

Her body already possessed powerful strength, however she was still unfamiliar with this power or rather she couldn't believe it. She looked around with a calm gaze. Those matchless beautiful eyes made the seductive woman feel extreme fear, as though she was laid bare.

The seductive woman felt as if her thoughts were seen through and became more and more afraid. Di Chen's aura was incredibly powerful...

After awhile, Di Chen withdrew her gaze and slowly walked down the Lotus platform.

"This is the insignia of the Lotus Realm's leader. These are the keys and passes. Also, you need to go and accept the Lotus inheritance and train in seclusion for three years," said the old woman with a smile as she handed the insignia to Di Chen.

"Secluded training for three years?" asked Di Chen in shock.

"Yes, you are currently unable to completely display the power hidden within your body. You need to train in the consummate

arts of the Lotus Realm. Only the Lotus Realm's leader is allowed to train in it," replied the old woman.

"I..."

"Chen`er, go. As long as you're strong, everything is possible," at this moment, Jiwu walked over and spoke to Di Chen gently with a smile.

At this moment, Di Chen seemed to realise something, however she did not fully understand it. She bowed towards the old woman, took the insignia and then bowed towards Jiwu. After that, she left with the old woman.

The old woman brought Di Chen to a place that only those with the insignia could enter. This was a hidden place, which felt like it was underground. This was the sacred grounds of the Lotus Realm and the inner area of the 'Divine Lotus' from the legends.

This time, Di Chen entered the place by herself without the old woman. Upon entering, Di Chen discovered that it was a small space that was empty. Advancing was like climbing a spiral staircase. The surroundings were wooden and most importantly, this place had a mysterious aura.

She remembered the old woman's words, sitting in the middle after walking in. The middle was right below a gigantic hanging dark green branch. This was the inner area of the Lotus Realm's Divine Lotus. While training here, she would obtain the Divine Lotus' inheritance and remold her body.

“There is a staircase inside. After going up, you can train in the ‘Divine Lotus Arts’. Under normal circumstances, you would reach small success stage after three years. At that time, you can exit. These three years will be three years of thorough change. The Spiritual Qi that has been accumulated for hundreds of years within the divine lotus will be absorbed by you.”

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After it faintly hurt for awhile, the pain in Qing Shui’s chest disappeared. The pain lasted for approximately an incense stick’s worth of time. After inspecting that there weren’t any problems with his internal organs, he stopped thinking about it.

Training! Refining!

He had given enough to that lady, which should make up for her losses. Regardless of who it was, Qing Shui didn’t like letting the other party suffer a loss, especially when she was helping him.

Both the Spirit Gathering Lamp and the Spirit Channeling Jade were upgraded. However, the Spirit Gathering Lamp’s degree of progress had slowed down. Currently, it had reached the fifth grade, its realm soared through the clouds.

The current Spirit Gathering Lamp was already incomparably powerful. Qing Shui tested it and found that its might had increased by approximately a fold. Originally, he had assumed that increasing a stage would lead to 10% increase. However, he later

noticed that while it got harder and harder to upgrade it by a stage, the might gained from each upgrade was incomparably strong.

This was good. The might and the killing power of the Thunderous Beast and the Fire Bird had doubled. Unfortunately, there were no changes to the Diamond Gigantic Elephant. In the future, the Spirit Gathering Lamp's realm would require a huge amount of time to refine.

The upgrading of the Spirit Channeling Jade seemed much harder than the other treasures. However, the results were also a lot stronger. This greatly increased Qing Shui's anticipation for the day that these items became powerful existences.

On the second day, Qing Shui had woken up very early and practised his slow and strange fist techniques as usual. Qing Shui's Taichi Fists had already surpassed the realm of 'intent over stance'. They now truly seemed to be at the Heavenly Grade realm. Although every fist was slow, it gave people a feeling of astonishment. If the Dong Family ancestor were to see this, he would definitely be gobsmacked as this feeling and intent was what he had pursued.

After he finished his morning training routine, Qing Shui finally took note of the lady who was standing not far away. Actually, he had already noticed her when she had arrived, but he did not want to stop till his morning training had finished.

She seemed to have a lot of things on her mind but she ended up keeping her silence. Looking at Qing Shui with a smile, she said, "Can you teach me how to cook?"

Among the things Qing Shui had given her were many spices. He had even written various recipes for her. These items were absolutely priceless.

“You cook, I’ll watch,” replied Qing Shui with a smile.

“Okay. You cook for the rest while I cook for myself. If it’s not delicious, others would laugh at me. I’ll eat what I cook. Even if it’s not nice I’ll not have any complaints,” said the lady after thinking.

This lady could unexpected say such cute words...

Just like that, Qing Shui cooked for the rest. There was no other way. These were good people and they loved to eat. This could be considered as expressing his thanks to the lady.

Even beautiful women needed to eat and liked to eat delicious food. By nature, humans desired for food and sex. Eating was one of the most important things in life. No matter how important something was, it definitely wasn’t as important as eating.

This lady was no exception. With the best spices, even the food that the lady made was pretty good. In most circumstances, when one ate the food they made themselves, one would feel that it’s more delicious. Qing Shui had given her a lot of spices since he still had a lot of spices stored in the Realm of the Violet Jade Immortal. Only a small amount of spices were used at each time and the amount he gave her was enough for the lady to use for many years.

After eating, everyone continued on their way. As before, Qing Shui and the lady were still grouped together as they headed towards the depths.

In half a month, they had already reached 30,000 li deep. They had obtained quite a few things and had escaped numerous times from hordes of huge demonic beasts. Fortunately, they were able to barely avoid the beasts. However, it was already slightly pushing it. He heard from the lady that beyond 50,000 li into the cave, they could only repel the beast hordes if they got too close and it was impossible to hide. Therefore they definitely had to always have a positional advantage. Otherwise it would be extremely dangerous.

AST 873 – Star Steel, Lightning Bees, Golden Beast, Powerful Woman

Within the Sky Penetrating Mountains!

Qing Shui had been in the mountains for two months. Currently, they didn't dare to split into groups to seek for treasures. Furthermore, they would try to obtain a thorough understanding of their surroundings before taking any action. As of now, they were already 500,000 kilometers into this place.

A large portion of the 'Treasure Hunting Pigs' were already stored by the lady. However, the lady had summoned tens of 'Lightning Bees' which caused Qing Shui to be stunned for quite a while.

The Lightning Bees were also called the path searching bees. They were the size of a thumb and their bodies were a grayish white. They were as resilient as diamonds and as quick as lightning. Although they didn't have any offensive capabilities, there were able to increase the scope of view of their master.

This was the most precious thing for an adventurer. Having numerous Lightning Bees would allow an adventurer to avoid many dangers, including potentially fatal ones. Lightning Bees would allow their master to feel the movements of the wind and the movements of every stalk of grass within their surroundings.

Although the Lightning Bees lacked offensive capabilities, they were fast and small. Most demonic beasts were simply unable to

attack them. As for those small beasts that eat bugs or birds, they were simply unable to eat them. The lady proceeded to lead everyone further into the mountain range. As they walked, they made numerous turns, allowing the Treasure Hunting Pigs to direct her from time to time. She aimed to search for treasures while evading strong demonic beasts.

Qing Shui was feeling a bit curious about this lady. Her family refines demons yet she was able to bring out tens of Treasure Hunting Pigs. Additionally, she brought out tens of Lighting Bees. The demonic beasts that she summoned were unable to fight, however, each and every one of them was worth cities...

“To the left!”

The lady spoke these two words before following the Treasure Hunting Pig. The pig dashed towards the left side of the mountain top. Qing Shui and the rest hurriedly followed her. At this current place, he had to bring out 120% of his effort to settle everything. Even Qing Shui didn't dare to have the slightest degree of carelessness.

During these past few days, it could be considered that he had seen the dangers of this Sky Penetrating Mountains. He had avoided quite a bit of poisonous miasma and faced that terrifying horde of Five Coloured Poison Beasts.

They arrived at an area with a group of swamplands in a valley. There were dense and numerous Five Coloured Poison Beasts, including Five Coloured Poison Alligators whose bodies hadn't even reached a meter in length. Additionally, their speeds were

just average, if they were faster, Qing Shui's group would be neck deep into trouble.

While he fled, Qing Shui didn't forget to catch a few poison beasts, tossing them into the poisonous pond within the Realm of the Violet Immortal. Plants and animals were able to live in the Realm of the Violet Immortal, including Qing Shui's demonic beasts. In addition to demonic beasts, there were also aquatic creatures. Even amphibious existences were able to live in his realm, including tortoises. The Five Coloured Poison Alligators were amphibious poisonous beasts.

They followed the Treasure Hunting Pig and ran to the peak, only to see it continuously knocking against a gigantic rock on the mountain peak. After a while, a jet black item appeared, infused with a cold glint.

Star Steel!

Everyone was shocked that this mountain peak actually had Star Steel. Furthermore, this piece of Star Steel seemed to be very large. Star Steel was the leftover essence from meteors after they were worn down from falling from the sky.

They were uncertain of the exact size of this Star Steel but this piece was at least three meters in size. Star Steel was an extremely precious metal. Most fires were unable to melt it and even sharp weapons were unable to cut it apart.

The lady took out her Mystical Connection Divine Sword and

tried to cut the steel a few times before finally giving up helplessly. Although she was able to leave a few scratches, wanting to extract it was an impossibility. The Star Steel was very thick and dense. With that weight, it wasn't a load that their spirit energy could withstand. Furthermore, it wasn't something that they could fit into their Interspatial Silk Sachets...

It would be very unfortunate if they couldn't bring it away. Suddenly, she looked at Qing Shui, who was standing a bit far away. Walking over, she gently asked, "Are you able to bring the Star Steel away? It's too much of a pity to leave it here."

"I'll give it a try!" replied Qing Shui after thinking. The Realm of the Violet Immortal could hold tens of thousands of these. However, he didn't know if his spirit energy could handle it, nor did he know if there would be any repulsion. Despite this, he still had to give it a try, after all, 'controlling items' with spirit energy was different from using one's strength. The lady's spatial item was absolutely big enough but her spirit energy probably hadn't reached the required level.

Qing Shui slowly placed his hands on the surface of the Star Steel. He could feel a strong spiritual energy emanating from it, causing him to become speechless. Only by touching it did he realize that this Star Steel wasn't like regular objects. Slowly, he started to activated his spirit energy.

The Yin Yang Image in his sea of consciousness rapidly started to revolve and gradually increased in speed. Spirit energy and strength had one aspect in common. If one suddenly used up too much and there was no response from their target, it would lead to

injuries and damage. This was just like a man trying to lift a heavy rock. If he tried to use his full strength to move it, it would result in exceptional suffering if he was unable to move it. In fact, his body would suffer injuries. Therefore, one had to slowly increase their output. This would reduce the likelihood of injury, as spirit energy injuries would result in injuries to the spirit.

The gigantic piece of Star Steel and the surrounding rock disappeared in a flash before everyone's eyes. Qing Shui had used around half of his spirit energy to store this gigantic piece of Star Steel. This was the immense efficacy of the Yin Yang Image. In that instant, the image had shone brighter than usual.

After Qing Shui was able to store it, everyone felt extremely happy. It was better that one of them managed to store it, rather than just leaving it here. The lady smiled towards Qing Shui before kneeling down to pat the head of the little gold pig beside her. The Treasure Hunting Pig closed its eyes in enjoyment, before suddenly opening its eyes and rapidly rushing down the mountain.

The harvest for today could be considered sufficient. Such a big piece of Star Steel, its value simply couldn't be calculated. However, they couldn't stay here for too long. The lady's group was unable to take it away, so Qing Shui being able to take it away was a good thing. Furthermore, the lady vaguely felt in her heart that despite not taking away the Sky Penetrating Grass, the items that she had gotten were absolutely more valuable than it.

After all, she was also a Beast Tamer...

Before they started walking down the mountain, they heard the

dense cries of numerous birds appearing in a place across the horizon, their sharp calls breaking the Heavens. Everyone was still standing on the mountain top and upon hearing this, they hurriedly ran down the mountain.

When they were half way down the mountain, the lady suddenly stopped. With an extremely unnatural expression, she looked at the group, before she slowly said, “There are numerous Berserk Dragons rushing up here from the bottom...”

Berserk Dragons were demonic beasts that possessed the bloodline of dragons from legends. Its appearance was similar to an earth dragon, albeit being somewhat smaller in size. However, the degree to which it could go berserk was comparable to the Violent Blood Bear. It was a Peak Marital Saint and its abilities were at least at three stars. Their highest strength was uncertain, as a few mutated stronger subspecies would often appear.

Roar...

Sky rending roars continuously rang out as a large flock of birds appeared in the distance. When they saw the flock, everyone became even more flustered. There were so many Vampiric Falcon Vultures that it made cold shivers run up everyone’s spines.

The appearance of the Berserk Dragons had let everyone guess that the flock of birds were Vampiric Falcon Vultures.

Vampiric Falcon Vultures weren’t very different from the Blood-Thirsty Bald Eagle, with strength ranging from Early Martial Saint

to Late Martial Saint. Only a small number were barely able to reach the Peak Martial Saint level. However, the probability was one in a million. They were approximately ten meters wide, possessed good speed, and their attacks had a poisonous attribute. This poison could accumulate and when they saw blood, they would get crazy. As long as blood was seen, they would want food no matter what.

A Vampiric Falcon Vulture was dark red and it had a falcon's head. Its beak was lined with densely packed half a foot of long sharp teeth. The poison came from its teeth.

The lady looked at her surroundings without being flustered. Looking at the nearby mountain, she saw a space that seemed like a shallow cave. The rocks here were exceptionally hard and dense, forming a large mountain. Even the Vampiric Falcon Vultures wouldn't dare to bump into this mountain. After all, they weren't demonic beasts with strong bodies and their strength was unable to cause the mountain to collapse.

If it were the mountains in Qing Shui's past life, it could possibly collapse. However, this was the World of the Nine Continents.

Everyone stood before that spacious 'cave entrance'. The mountain peak above gently protruded out, so they wouldn't have to worry about getting attacked from the top. Just as they stood firm, immense roars started to ring out from below.

Berserk Dragons!

Qing Shui looked at the innumerable Berserk Dragons and his goosebumps stood up uncontrollably. Their scarlet bodies were like a lion's and they were approximately 30 meters long. Their fierce heads were a cross between a lion and a camel, and their jaws filled with massive sharp teeth. A thick stench of blood came hurtling over.

Being almost ten meters tall, their four thick limbs that were armed with sharp claws could rip almost anything to shreds.

As the innumerable Berserk Dragons dashed about, a great thumping noise rang out from the ground. The hurried noises seemed to resonate with everyone's hearts but the mountain where they hid didn't have a single trace of vibration.

Originally, Qing Shui thought that this mountain might collapse. He thought about the scars that the meteor had caused when it landed on the mountain peak. It looked like the rocks here were hard and firm and had a frightening density. However, it was a pity that this stone couldn't be refined and reforged.

The lady wielded her Mystical Connection Divine Sword as she faintly frowned. With a wave of her hand, four golden beasts appeared. A few of the other old people also summoned their demonic beasts. However, they only summoned one demonic beast each, and their demonic beasts weren't as eye catching as the lady's four golden beasts.

The golden beast was a rare demonic beast. Its body was similar to that of a Berserk Dragon and it looked noble and graceful. The strength of this demonic beast lied in its penetrative attack and its

extraordinarily high defense. Its massive body was tough as diamonds. It was one of the best in term of its application of raw strength since it had abandoned magic and combat technique type attacks. Therefore, its defense, speed, and the might of its claws and teeth were all extraordinarily strong.

What a trump card!. Every time this lady took action, it would always be a major move. Qing Shui summoned his Diamond Gigantic Elephant and the Ten Thousand Poisonous Violet Sable. Naturally, there was also the Fire Bird. Due to the Spirit Gathering Lamp, the Fire Bird's attacking power would double. This was an enormous breakthrough.

Upon climbing up, those demonic beasts started attacking crazily. Fortunately, their location was unique and prevented them from being attacked from behind. The number of attacking demonic beasts did not exceed 30, with the Berserk Dragons being the primary attackers.

The base strength of the Fire Bird was close to a star, and its strength was already more than 9,000 countries. Under the effects of Phoenix Dance, its abilities were permanently doubled. Additionally, the Phoenix Dance of the Nine Heavens and the might of the 'Hell's Inferno doubled its strength once again, allowing the Fire Bird's attack power to reach four stars.

As of now, with the Spirit Gathering Lamp, its attack power could even eight stars. It took to the skies and rushed towards the Vampiric Falcon Vultures and the Berserk Dragons. The Vampiric Falcon Vultures were similar in strength to the Fire Bird, with the Vampiric Falcon Vultures having the advantage of a poison

attribute and numbers.

The strength of the majority of Berserk Dragons weren't even a bit inferior to the Fire Bird and there even a small amount that exceeded it.

Although the individual strengths of Qing Shu's group were significantly higher than the Berserk Dragons and the Vampiric Falcon Vultures, it was difficult to fend off so many enemies. Even a hero wouldn't be able to withstand that many foes. A small mistake could cost all their lives. Due to the innumerable amounts of demonic beasts in the sky and on the ground, if they were to attract even stronger demonic beasts, they would be in real deep sh*t.

At this moment, a few crystal cards appeared in the lady's hand, which she tossed onto the golden beasts. She had a few cards left, so she casually gave Qing Shui one.

At this moment, Qing Shui saw the effects of the cards. These cards seemed to increase the strength and destructiveness of the user's attacks. This improved their penetrative power. Only now did he remember that the Mu Family was a family of Demon Tamers.

The Mu Family was very strong!

This was what Qing Shui's felt.

The Fire Bird's Phoenix Dance of the Nine Heavens could only be sustained for 15 minutes but its might was truly enormous. The strong Hell's Inferno had immediately killed many Vampiric Falcon Vultures instantly.

Even the Berserk Dragons on the ground couldn't endure the flames. After continual use of Hell's Inferno, tens of Berserk Dragons were killed directly. However, this attack had an unfortunately high consumption rate. Although the Fire Bird could enter the Realm of the Violet Immortal to recover, it would still require some pills and occasionally some Vital Essence Pill.

The Ten Thousand Poisonous Violet Sable was as quick as lightning. It only needed to attack the weak parts of the Berserk Dragons, which were the face, the ears, and the abdomen. After those parts were attacked, the Berserk Dragons would die in a few hours.

The poison of the Ten Thousand Poisonous Violet Sable had already become something that the previous version couldn't be compared to. After being strengthened by Qing Shui's medicinal pills and that pearl, it wasn't far from becoming six colored.

AST 874 – Soulshake Bell, Subduing The Dragons, Taming The Tigers, Berserk Dragon King Appears

Qing Shui and their group were sufficient to defend the place, however their hearts were a mess, as no one knew how many Demonic Beasts were out there. When this kind of situation appears, it is very easy to attract stronger demonic beasts.

This was the Sky Penetrating Mountains and it was not the least bit strange for strong demonic beasts to appear at any time. It could be considered unfortunate that they had met with Berserk Dragons. Although this demonic beast wasn't like the Berserk Blood Bear that would fight and never retreat, they would not retreat until you killed enough to make them terrified.

Roars shook the skies and coupled with the sharp screeches of the Vampiric Falcon Vulture, the entire area was extremely chaotic, making people flustered.

The ground was littered with the corpses of many Vampiric Falcon Vulture and Berserk Dragons, however they were quickly devoured by the Vampiric Falcon Vultures. Regardless of whose corpses they were, as long as they saw blood, even those that were still living would be met with their attacks, sucking their blood until they died.

Qing Shui held a shield in one hand and the Thunder God in the other. From time to time the shield would smash open a gap between the incoming beasts or the Thunder God would

instantaneously destroy a Berserk Dragon.

He continuously dished out Raging Blows, which he had practiced within the Realm of the Violet Immortal, with his fists as a replacement for the hammer. Although he had later used the Thunder God to train, it wasn't as enjoyable as now, as at least this was considered a real battle.

He was getting more and more familiar with this practical combat skill and the resulting terrifying might of each hammer strike was enough for the lady beside him to shoot an astonished look at him. If not for the battle, she would definitely stare at him for a longer period of time. Furthermore, she seemed to feel that the hammer skill that he was unleashing definitely had some connection with the Raging Blow, as she could feel the rage building.

What made the lady especially astonished was Qing Shui's Shield Attack. The terrifying force of the shield bash seemed to be able to topple a mountain. Every single strike of it was able to smash numerous Berserk Dragons back and clear a huge empty space, with the smashed Berserk Dragon immediately exploding and dying. In addition there was Fire Bird in the air, terrifying flames continuously spewing from it. The Vampiric Falcon Vultures were immediately killed upon contact. This basically blocked the top part of the cave, preventing them from entering it.

The geography here was good, similar to the sort where one man can hold the pass against all enemy forces. Otherwise Fire Bird would not be able to hold back such an enormous cast of Vampiric Falcon Vultures. However, after 15 minutes passed the Phoenix

Dance of the Nine Heavens state was going to dissipate. At that time the might of Hell's Inferno would drop by half. Although it was still lethal against the Vampiric Falcon Vultures, it did not have any killing power towards the Berserk Dragons on the ground.

15 minutes passed very quickly and in addition this intense combat has resulted in enormous energy consumption for the Fire Bird.

Qing Shui's hand speed slowed down for a moment as he looked at the endless bestial horde and the dense and numerous Vampiric Falcon Vultures in the sky.

His mind was quickly thinking. Although the Vampiric Falcon Vultures were terrifying, their strength was comparatively quite low and could be easily killed. Furthermore, as long as they could run to the valley below, these things would not be anything to worry about.

Therefore the main problem was these Berserk Dragons. Not only did they block the ground, their group could not just fly up and leave, as these Berserk Dragons were also able to fly. Although they could not fly for long, they were exceptionally quick in short distances. Therefore, once they go airborne, they would be engulfed by these demonic beasts. They were better off defending this place.

While fighting, Qing Shui slowly inched towards the lady.

“Do you have any other ideas? Could it be that we have to kill all them?” asked Qing Shui, while his hands did not stop.

“Unless you slaughter their ‘King’, in most cases they will not retreat.” The lady also did not stop her attacks, however she did pan her head over to shoot a look at him.

“Their ‘King’?” asked Qing Shui without turning around.

“That’s the king among the Berserk Dragons. As long as you can kill it, they will retreat,” replied the lady softly.

Qing Shui understood.

The Diamond Gigantic Elephant would unleash a Mighty Elephant Stomp from time to time. Within this kind of battle, the Vajra Subdues Demons was already useless. It continuously unleashed the Might Elephant Stomp, Diamond Sword Qi and Ferocious Diamond Attack

The Ten Thousand Poisonous Violet Sable had it the easiest, as it relied on its speed to continuously massacre the surrounding Berserk Dragons. For now, Fire Bird was the only killing the Vampiric Falcon Vultures in the air.

Qing Shui faintly wrinkled his brows, as he was unable to see the king of the Berserk Dragons. Without even trying he could guess that it was at the back of this horde. However, if he left this place, not only would he get attacked in the back, he would even get

attacked from the sky. Qing Shui did not have the confidence to prevent this from happening.

“Let’s try to agitate the king that is hidden behind these Berserk Dragons. We have to force it out, if not we’re truly finished,” muttered Qing Shui before clenching his teeth as he made his decision.

Shield Attack, Shield Attack...

Total Annihilation

Mighty Elephant Stomp...

Qing Shui’s Mighty Elephant Stomp was stronger than that displayed by the Diamond Gigantic Elephant and the instantaneous eruption created a stretch of empty space. In the next moment, Qing Shui brought out the Soulshake bell and gave it a fierce shake towards the large wave of incoming Berserk Dragons.

Its sound no better than wailing of ghosts and howling of wolves, however it did not have any effect to humans, although the sounds it produced were truly horrible to listen to. Fortunately it was still bearable, however it was a different story for demonic beasts, who were now in a miserable state.

Instantly the entire battleground turned lively, as Qing Shui started to inject spirit energy into the Soulshake Bell.

This caused everyone present to be completely shocked, as chaos erupted throughout the entire battleground. Of the demonic beasts, ten odd of them were immediately killed, while tens of them fled. The most important point was that roughly fifty that had turned hysterical and started attacking the Berserk Dragons besides them.

Due to the special geography of this place, over fifty of them were enough to completely block this place. Although momentarily they had unexpectedly entered a deadlock, the Soulshake Bell had sent the Berserk Dragons into a hysterical state, leaving them unable to differentiate friend from foe. Due to the hysterical state, they disregarded any end result and just attacked. Therefore, momentarily their combat prowess had increased some and the group was in a deadlock.

Unfortunately the hysterical Berserk Dragons could not recognize friend from foe. It wasn't a mutiny, nor was it because they accepted the commands of Qing Shui. They were attacking everything near them, humans and demonic beasts alike.

The lady looked at the pretty violet colored Soulshake Bell in Qing Shui's hand. She was a beast tamer and knew what it was, however she had not imagined that there actually was such a thing.

The ancient records had listed this as a nemesis to beast tamers, the Soulshake Bell. It was specially built to counter demonic beasts. Right now it truly was incomparably powerful. If a beast tamer only had a few demonic beasts, it was truly not enough to kill him...

The Mu family people were also looking at Qing Shui dumbfound. However, they quickly regained their wits. Now, they had seemed to feel that compared to their miss, the monstrous existence of this youth seemed to not be much inferior.

After refining the Soulshake Bell, filling it up with spirit energy require a bit of time, approximately an incense stick's worth of time. Therefore for this moment Qing Shui was imbuing it while clutching the Thunder God, preparing to enter combat at any moment.

The fifty hysterical Berserk Dragons were able to hold off for a while. Furthermore there were tens of them that had fled. This created a ripple in the enormous bestial horde, like a tidal wave.

Very quickly those hysterical Berserk Dragons were killed and were eaten clean by the Vampiric Falcon Vultures in the air. Those who had fled had disappeared without a trace. At this moment Qing Shui's Soulshake Bell was already fully charged and could be used again.

Another shake.

The previous occurrence appeared again in the battlefield. However, this time the results were even stronger than the previous time. The Soulshake Bell's realm was already at the seventh level, the realm of vanquishing dragons and tigers.

A level Seven Soulshake Bell was already strong and in addition it

was quickly entering the eighth level. Qing Shui did not know how many levels could it be promoted to in this realm and in this world. The current might was considered pretty good but Qing Shui was anticipating the future.

The Soulshake Bell was able to control no more than ten demonic beasts. It produces a terrifying sound that would frighten and shake the soul. There's a 30% chance of causing the target to become flustered and flee. A 20% chance of turning hysterical, making it attack everything in its surroundings. A 10% chance of immediately causing death, regardless of the target's level. A few special demonic beasts are able to reduce the efficacy of the Soulshake Bell.

This percentage wasn't considered high, however it was absolutely not low. Furthermore its greatest effect was to disregard the target's level. Just that some special demonic beasts were able to lower these percentages.

He had displayed it so many times in an instant, therefore the success rate was still quite low. This time, the result had approximately doubled when compared to before. Therefore there was quite a spectacle created in the battleground.

Only now, after meeting with a strong beast horde did Qing Shui discover that the Spiritual Qi of the Soulshake Bell was insufficient. Due to its high realm, the Spiritual Qi consumed in every use was significant. Looks like he still needed to promote its realm.

Time passed by bit by bit just like that. At this time, it was

already close to midday. The battle was still continuing. It was already the tenth time that Qing Shui had used the Soulshake Bell.

From the second time to the third time, there were still ten odd of hysterical Berserk Dragons left. After using the bell multiple times, the end result was pretty good, therefore after the last usage there were actually close to four hundred hysterical demonic beasts.

Roar!

Just at this moment, a roar that pierced through the clouds suddenly resounded out from behind the beastial horde.

Roar! Roar!

Two consecutive roars followed and the Berserk Dragon group that was originally slightly hysterical immediately started to grow berserk again, charging towards the hysterical Berserk Dragons. Furthermore, after that roar, Qing Shui discovered that the combat prowess of the hysterical Berserk Dragons had declined. This was a sort of instinctive dread towards their king.

This made the situation where they could defend with difficulty disintegrate instantaneously, as the Berserk Dragons were mutually killing themselves. Qing Shui looked over to the origin of the roar. He knew that these roars were made by the Berserk Dragon King, as only it had such capability.

On a mountaintop far away, Qing Shui spotted the Berserk Dragon King's figure.

The scarlet red figure appeared more brightly colored than a normal Berserk Dragon, like an intense raging inferno. It was more than two times the size of a normal Berserk Dragon and was similar to that of an Earth Dragon Beast King. However, this Berserk Dragon King looked more violent. With a single look, Qing Shui could tell that it was very strong, as the imposing aura radiating from it could prove.

There was still some distance from him but Qing Shui still prepared to rush towards it. However, he was held back, the soft feeling indicating that it was the lady beside him. Turning his head back, he looked at her, causing her to let go of his hand in a fluster.

She had previously wanted to grab onto Qing Shui's sleeve, however Qing Shui had wanted to rush over. With a move of his hand, it had resulted in her grabbing his hand...

The lady's heart beat very quickly. Releasing his hand, she shook her head while blushing.

Qing Shui looked at the lady. Never would he have imagined that her blushing appearance would cause even his heart to beat faster. This was an unspeakable allure and belong to a refined and absolutely beautiful woman like her.

"We've already completely angered it. It'll come here quickly. Don't go, it's dangerous," said the lady softly.

The lady's mind was actually already in turmoil. She had already discovered it but what she discovered was not as intense as it actually was. This was the first time she felt such a sensation. She felt very confused and did not like such a feeling.

AST 875 – Magnificent Violet Lightning Strike, Insta-Kill, Refining Demons

Looking at that unnatural expression of the lady, Qing Shui hurriedly turned his head aside, not wanting to see that lovable appearance. He started to laugh mockingly at himself. It was easy for men to lose their self-control in front of women. Although he did not want to provoke any other woman, there were still times where it was easy for him to get distracted. In fact it was not a definite thing that he needed to possess her, however he was unable to control himself. This was the charm of beautiful women.

The lady quickly regained her composure. However she could not help but feel shameful for what happened earlier, in her heart. She was thinking about whether she had purposefully grabbed his hand, what would he think about this, would he think of her as... thinking about this, she felt that her heart was in complete disarray.

Very quickly she felt worried about her own thoughts and for a moment became stunned and at a complete loss.

The hysterical Berserk Dragons were once again slaughtered completely. When Qing Shui waved his hands to activated the Soulshake Bell again, the gigantic fiery red figure on the mountaintop suddenly ferociously launched itself over, obviously targeting Qing Shui.

Although the distance was too far its speed was akin to the speed of lightning.

Qing Shui put away the Soulshake Bell and took out the Descending Heavens Talisman as well as the two Ten Thousand Year Coldsteel Bead dipped in highly toxic poisons. Then, he stared at the gigantic demonic beast currently heading here at rapid speed.

The gigantic demonic beast did not fly, however its speed seemed faster than flying. Every jump and bound it made shoot it over hundreds of meters each time.

Qing Shui stared closely at it. At the same time, the lady and those old people from the Mu Family were also staring at that Berserk Dragon King. They were experts of a region and could feel how terrifying this gigantic Berserk Dragon King was.

Time did not permit them rest and if they continued on like that everyone would run dry. In addition, there were strong bestial roars ringing faintly from a distance, causing people's hearts to palpitate.

Qing Shui started to slowly calm down. This was a very strange feeling. He was quietly contemplating and waiting. The Berserk Dragon King was very fast and even Qing Shui felt that his speed was still inferior to it.

Suddenly, the Descending Heavens Talisman in Qing Shui's hand rapidly shot out.

It was unable to hit anything at this distance, however the

Berserk Dragon King was still running over. Therefore it had arrived at just the right moment. Seemingly at the same time, Qing Shui's Emperor's Qi and Fiery Golden Eyes had already rapidly shot out.

At this time there was no need to be polite, furthermore the people in the surroundings could only see him sending out the talisman. At the same time, the Diamond Gigantic Elephant rushed towards the Berserk Dragon King as it activated "Vajra Subdues Demons".

Vajra's Glare!

After using his techniques, Qing Shui did not even bother to calculate his opponent's remaining strength, as he immediately summoned the Thunderous Beast while shooting forward at the same time.

Seven Star Armored Vest!

"It's dangerous, come back!" upon seeing Qing Shui's actions, the lady panicked and shouted in a loud voice.

Violet Lightning Strike!

After Qing Shui had shot forward for a certain distance, the Thunderous Beast sent a Violet Lightning Strike at the Berserk Dragon King, instantly locking it in the sky. At this moment, Qing Shui's two Ten Thousand Year Coldsteel Beads suddenly shot out.

The most important thing now was that Qing Shui was within ten meters of the Berserk Dragon King.

The reason why Qing Shui rushed out was that he was worried about the duration of the Lightning Beast's Violet Lightning Strike. Also if he was too far away, he was afraid that the other Berserk Dragons would interfere. Therefore he had seemingly finished everything from weakening to attacking in an instant.

The two Ten Thousand Year Coldsteel Beads infused with extremely toxic poisons shot straight at the two gigantic eyes of the Berserk Dragon King. That was the weakest place in its body. Furthermore, the most important point was that they could shoot directly into its brain, causing lethal damage.

Qing Shui wanted to kill it in one strike, as time did not permit him otherwise. After a single attack, he immediately retreated. Within that short instant, Qing Shui had already been attacked for tens of times. Fortunately he had evaded any lethal attacks as he had the Seven Star Armored Vest, coupled with people supporting him for a place not far from him.

The Thunderous Beast stood at a distance and continuously used its Thunderbolt. Any Vampiric Falcon Vulture that was struck would instantly be killed. The high single target attack added to its base strength as well as the Spirit Gathering Lamp made it have a very strong effect.

Only when Qing Shui had returned to his original position, did the gigantic Berserk Dragon King start crying out mournfully and miserably. Its eyes were blinded, as the two Ten Thousand Year

Coldsteel Beads entered its brain carrying along highly toxic poisons.

Roar!

Immense roars rang out as the pain caused it to unceasingly go crazy where it was. All of the demonic beasts around it suffered a calamity, as they had a huge disparity in size compared to it, with their strength being even more so. Therefore a large number of them were instantly killed by the crazy Berserking Dragon King.

Thunderbolt!

The Thunderous Beast's Thunderbolt continuously landed on the Berserk Dragon King's body. Added with the rapid flare-up of the poisons, it quickly collapsed.

The Berserk Dragon King died, which instantly disturbed the entire Berserk Dragon horde. At this time Qing Shui and the rest would naturally not give up on this chance, with him taking out the Soulshake Bell again.

Very quickly, the bestial horde became restless, they began to retreat and then fled. Along with those that had fled earlier due to the Soulshake Bell, the demonic beasts that fled quickly formed small groups.

These groups started to gradually expand as close quarter battles continued. The most important point was that their king was

already dead. Gradually, the number of fleeing ones grew larger and larger. As for the Vampiric Falcon Vultures in the air, they seemed to be unwilling to leave, making sharp screeches as they stared at the corpses on the ground.

Qing Shui gave a stomp on the rock floor below him, immediately creating many shattered chunks of rock. Qing Shui's hand quickly swept across the rocks tumbling in the air. Every time he touched a rock it would rapidly shoot out, taking the life of a Vampiric Falcon Vulture in the process.

Qing Shui's actions were methodical and thoroughly and very quickly many Vampiric Falcon Vulture corpses fell onto the ground. At the same time, the Diamond Gigantic Elephant activated the Mighty Elephant's Recklessness and rushed into the cast of Vampiric Falcon Vultures.

Mighty Elephant's Stomp!

The Diamond Gigantic Elephant had tough skin and thick muscle. Without the Berserk Dragon horde, these Blood Sucking Falcon Vampires were nothing to worry about.

"Let's quickly descend. We can't stay here for long," said the lady as she walked over to Qing Shui.

"Okay!"

Qing Shui recalled his demonic beasts and quickly descended

with the lady and the Mu family people. While traveling he conveniently threw the Berserk Dragon King's corpse into the Realm of the Violet Immortal and also a few Berserk Dragon corpses, in preparation for drawing talismans.

This battle made Qing Shui realize the might of the Thunderous Beast. Naturally there was also the mysterious usefulness of the Spirit Gathering Lamp. It could double the might of the demonic beast's magic. Not only could it double the might, in addition, it could double the auxiliary effects and intensity too.

For example, the speed reduction effect of the Violet Lightning Strike was doubled, as was the paralysis effect time!.

Qing Shui and the other people of the Mu Family followed the lady and rapidly traveled through the mountain valley, quickly reaching a place that was unobstructed on three fronts with a concealed mountain cave ahead. After battling for half a day, everyone was tired.

Upon entering it, they sealed the mountain cave with a gigantic stone.

The intelligence of demonic beasts was inferior to humans and most would simply not knock any rock they see. After sealing the cave, very little light could penetrate in. Fortunately, the lady took out some light stones and placed them at a few corners. After doing so, everyone took their time to pitch their tents, while a few old people placed cotton mattresses beside a wall not far away. Sitting down they started to chat.

Qing Shui had also pitched his tent, however he had finished it quickly. After saying his greetings to the others, he entered his tent. He still had things to do and he could not waste time.

For the Berserk Dragon King corpse that he had thrown in earlier, he had in fact wanted to subdue this kind of demonic beast. The only thing was that he could not achieve that, nor could the lady and she was a beast tamer.

However, the reason why Qing Shui had immediately killed it was because the king of a demonic beast horde is seemingly impossible to be tamed. The success rates were too small, especially when one wanted to forcefully tame it, which could just be neglected.

It was due to this reason that Qing Shui had killed it. He had planned to refine it later and the time of a demonic beast's death was important, as it could not be too long. Therefore Qing Shui had hurriedly pitched his tent before heading into the Realm of the Violet Immortal.

A moment in the outside world was a very long time in the Realm of the Violet Immortal. The shorter the period since death, the better the results were. Therefore, upon entering his hand immediately started the Primordial Demon Refining Furnace up, throwing the Berserk Dragon King corpse into it.

After swallowing a Vital Essence Pill, he started his refinement. Now it was considered a walk in the park, as he was already very

clear on the places that he needed to pay attention to. Added with the growth of his strength and spirit energy, this made Qing Shui feel relaxed and pleased with refining.

The Primordial Demon Refining Furnace slowly started to shrink, as the glow on its surface continuously sparkled. The demonic beast drawings were clear and natural, vivid and lifelike, even continuously producing faint bestial roars, showing its awe and prestige.

Qing Shui's hands gently patted the surface of the Primordial Demon Refining Furnace, spirit energy continuously entering it through his use of the Thousand Buddha Palm Imprint. This made his refinement of demonic beasts seem as if it was a coincidence.

This was because he had tested this way ever since he had started doing this, all the way until he gradually discovered that his refining abilities were very strong. This might be due to the relationship between the Primordial Demon Refining Furnace and the "Buddha's Power" within his body.

The Primordial Demon Refining Furnace grew smaller and smaller as the various pure light halos grew more and more abundant. The drawing grew more clear and distinct as it slowly regained its original small size.

A familiar sound rang out, informing Qing Shui it succeeded. Every time he refined he would be excited. This time was no different, thus he had immediately taken a look at the furnace after its completion.

Demonic Beast Origin Essence Soul Pearl!

In the first look he spotted the familiar demonic beast essence pill. Scarlet red in color, it was the size of a fist and radiated violent energies. In actual fact, when refining demonic beasts what Qing Shui had anticipated the most was the Demonic Beast Origin Essence Soul Pearl!

There were also three crystal cards, with the drawings on them being the image of the Berserk Dragon King.

Looking at its description, it was “Berserk”. When used, it would add a certain amount of berserk strength.

Qing Shui thought the concept of it was slightly unclear, however he had the Demonic Beast Origin Essence Soul Pearl and that was sufficient for him. The value of it was absolutely the highest he ever achieved and it was the strongest Demonic Beast Origin Essence Soul Pearl he had ever refined.

After putting all of these things away, he left the Realm of the Violet Immortal. After all it was still daytime. Everyone had come here to rest for a while. Walking out of the tent, he saw that there were still some people inside their tents, while the rest were outside.

He did not place the previous battle in his heart, as he had seen many similar instances and had already been used to it.

Now it was already noon and the previous battle had resulted in too much consumption of their energy. There was already a large piece of Berserk Dragon meat as well as an antelope in the cave. Although it could be said that the stronger the demonic beast the more delicious it's meat was, there were people who disliked eating demonic beast meat.

It was time to roast the meat. Now there would be numerous people working together to roast the meat and prepare the food. An old person sprinkled some powder at the cave entrance. This could prevent the air within the cave from circulating to the outside and it lasted for 24 hours.

This battle had thoroughly caused all the old people not dare to look down on Qing Shui, especially after the Thunderous Beast had shown itself. The beautiful Violet Lightning Strike and Qing Shui's lethal attack had caused their hearts to palpitate.

This youth was a killer. In fact they still did not know that Qing Shui had used weakening techniques when killing that Berserk Dragon King. For now, they were unable to determine the extent of Qing Shui's strength.

AST 876 – Complex Women, Thoughts, Mu Qing

Only when it was time to eat did the lady appear. Still wearing her golden phoenix gown, a faint smile on her face. Her beauty was noble and elegant, elegant to her core.

Taking a properly roasted leg of meat from the firepit, she took a seat beside Qing Shui, as that was the only empty place left.

There were tables and chairs within the cave, which were Qing Shui's. He had bought a few in the Southern City Furniture Store and they had been brought into use now. These tables and chairs were precious, very clean without a single speck of dust.

When the lady had just come out and noticed all of these, she was in shock for a while. After that, she proceeded to look towards Qing Shu. Only this man would be able to have such luxurious behavior.

Exactly how big was his spatial storage device. This set of table and chairs took up a lot of space. Although the lady thought about all this, she still sat beside him. Taking small bites at a time, she continued to ponder.

The soup, stewed meat and such not far away emitted an enticing fragrance, which entered straight into the bottom of their hearts. With a whiff, they were already feeling slightly unable to wait and were itching to immediately eat everything.

Everyone else was all wolfing down their food, simply not caring about their image. Only the lady was not hurried or rushed. Although she was eating faster than the previous times, she still was graceful and elegant. It was to the point that it made other people unable to resist looking at her eating, as it was a kind of enjoyment. This was a feast for one's eyes.

Just like her speech and her appearance made people feel that they haven't seen or heard her enough. This was a kind of beauty where it was not necessary to possess. When people come across a perfect existence, for example scenery, environment, construction, object or person, they would be a feeling as if they haven't seen enough and appreciation that comes from the heart.

This was considered appreciation, at least for a while.

When talking about furniture, Qing Shui thought about Di Chen and the Immortal Bed. That bed had always followed along with her and would go wherever she went. It was considered a pretty good thing, it was a pity that he did not get to practice his "workmanship".

He he could not be bothered to deal with it recently and did not have that thought. Good furniture, cabinets, tables and chairs, curtains, carpets, beds were all incomparably priceless, as the majority of them were made using precious wood, with some of them even having some profound principles within.

Qing Shui decided he could research this in the future and not

now.

After eating that oily meat, Qing Shui discovered the lady's eating posture was still the same without any change. Not like those old people, who did not speak much, hands covered in oil.

So much meat and soup was consumed. A few of the old people went to wash the dishes, as it would be embarrassing to just eat by relying on "seniority". Furthermore, they did not have the qualification of playing the senior in front of this youth, as the youth was not a Mu Clan member...

After cleaning up everything, everyone decided to rest for the afternoon before heading out the next morning. Qing Shui decided to walk around in the vicinity, familiarizing himself with the environment of the Sky Penetrating Mountains.

The lady watched as Qing Shui's figure walked out and returned to her tent. She could see that he wanted to get used to the environment here, as he wanted to head deeper in.

Upon leaving, Qing Shui followed the mountain valley. The valley was broad below and got progressively narrower as it got higher, where it finally became a single person pathway.

After walking for a period of time, Qing Shui shook his head and sighed, "Big miss, there's no need to follow me like that. It's better to walk together."

After saying that, Qing Shui turned around.

Behind a large stone, the Mu Clan girl walked out with a slightly embarrassed expression. Looking at Qing Shui, she slowly walked over. She was worried about him and she now wanted him to remain as safe as possible, as after all he was brought along by her and the other family members.

“You’re worried about me meeting with danger?” asked Qing Shui with a smile as he looked at the elegant and absolutely beautiful lady in front of him.

“I know you’re strong and you’re insistent on finding the Sky Penetrating Grass. I still consider myself familiar with this place. Furthermore, you can also see that I’ve a thing that’s slightly strange. Is it alright for me to go together with you? I promise that the Mu Clan will do their best to ensure your safety” asked the lady after thinking

“No!” replied Qing Shu straightforwardly.

Hearing his immediate answer, she was startled; she had never been rejected like this before. She gawked for a while before smiling. She seemed to have suddenly discovered that she had already subconsciously lost the freedom and principles that she had in the past. She felt that she currently seemed to not be herself.

“Don’t tell me that one more person doesn’t equate to having one more piece of hope? Furthermore I’m more familiar with this place

and the Sky Penetrating Mountains than you.” replied the lady softly as she looked at Qing Shui.

“I know you’re doing this for my well being, however you don’t need to take this kind of risk. Relax, if there truly was any trouble the Mu Family won’t blame you,” said Qing Shui as he shook his head.

The lady laughed bitterly for a while. She did not know what mood she was in now, after being ignored by this man again and again. Furthermore she had unexpectedly done such things. This was something that she would absolutely not think about in the past.

She did not know why? Could it be that she was curious? The Mu Family had asked her to take care of him. This wasn’t a reason, therefore the current reason was herself.

She felt conflicted. This was the first time she had met with a man that she did not hate and in addition was very strong, much much stronger than that group of boastful geniuses at the county city...

She definitely had not fallen for him. She was very rational. In addition, she knew that she would have to wed someone in the future, therefore she had to hold her future in her grasp. And this was her trying to give herself a chance.

From the previous time, especially before in the tent, she had thought about it many, many times, before making the decision.

However, this man seemed to not have any intention of getting close to her.

People were like that. In the past, wherever she walked to, people would revolve around her. In fact, many males would treat getting acquainted with Big Miss Mu as a form of glory. Being able to speak with her would make them excited for many days...

However, she did not have any feelings for those people, just like how two people standing in the arena that were not opposite ends, destined to never be together.. There was no way to get close and intimate and will always be in a situation where be either one of them stepping on the other person's head. She did not want that kind of life.

Although she currently did not know everything about this man. She knew that she could stand together with him on a stage. She had an idea of trying this out, as she did not wish to let go of this opportunity. However, this man seemed to not have such a plan...

“Are we considered friends now?” the lady looked at the surroundings while asking Qing Shui, however she did not look at him. She was afraid of him seeing through her.

“Yes we should!” replied Qing Shui with a smile. He did not wish to lie to her. Maybe they were friends now, however when he left he did not know whether he would come back here again. After saying goodbye, the transformations of the world might make her forget who he was.

After hearing Qing Shui's words the intelligent her could naturally hear the half-heartedness within his tone. He had given her those items and had insisted on giving to her before she had even demanded anything from him.

She truly had no plans to demand anything, as she did not believe that he was able to take them out. Therefore only now did she know why was he so insistent on giving them to her.

He did not wish to owe her. He must have taken all his precious things out, as she thought about the medicinal pills, the wine, the spices...

The two of them remained silent. The lady was also very prideful. After encountering such a situation, which was that she had thought clearly about it and wanted to chat with Qing Shui, however, she did not know how to open her mouth to start the conversation.

Qing Shui's actions made her very happy. If he was to take the initiative and chase after her, like the other disciples from the aristocratic clan, she would not have a favorable impression of him but she would not be troubled by this. However, it was her turn to feel difficult to talk about her feelings.

"It's easier for me to flee and run by myself. I've a fleeing technique. I've come to the Eastern Victory Divine Continent for the sake of finding for the Sky Penetrating Grass. I'm a person of the Greencloud Continent. Perhaps I might never return to the Eastern Victory Divine Continent again," said Qing Shui slowly with a smile. Even if he were to ever return, there seemed to be no

chance of them meeting in such a big place like the Eastern Victory Divine Continent, furthermore he could just avoid her.

Qing Shui had seemingly spotted this point, however it was just that he did not believe it. Although it could be considered that he and this lady had basically been cohabitating together and they had even eaten their meals together, he did not believe that this lady, that would make Dong Yan and Sun Yan feel inferior, would take fancy to him.

If it was that easy for her to like a person, she wouldn't wait till she met him.

However, Qing Shui still said those words. Although he did not say it clearly, he wanted her to act as if he had many relationships, as he thought about the previous time the lady had grabbed his hand.

He did not know whether it was unintentional or on purpose. Qing Shui shook his head, matters about relationships are the most tiring.

“Let's go together!” said the lady as she smiled towards Qing Shui, indeed seemingly having let go of a lot of things.

“Okay!”

“We can be considered to have some predestined affinity. Our names are both two words, in addition we both have a Qing in our

names. I'm called Mu Qing," said the lady by walking.

"I'm called Qing Shui and I came from Greencloud Continent," said Qing Shui with a smile. He had said so much previously just to let her know about his intent. Now that she knew it, being a friend was not a bad thing.

Now, it was different from before. Now it was making friends.

The two of them followed and walked along the mountain valley. There was very little vegetation growing on the mountain rocks. If there was vegetation, it was located halfway up the mountain or at sheer cliffs and precipices. Qing Shui slowly spread out his consciousness.

This was the Sky Penetrating Mountains and they could meet with danger anytime.

"You definitely love your wife!" said Mu Qing in a seemingly casual question.

Qing Shui's body suddenly turned stiff. He could only laughbitterly while replying, "Yes, I love them very much."

Qing Shui did not wish to hide it from her. He had hoped that this would allow an prideful person like her to lose her interest towards him. The question she was asking about should be the lady in the crystal coffin.

Hearing Qing Shui's reply, the lady was startled as Qing Shui had said that he loved them. However, she understood it very quickly. It would be too unordinary for a man like him to have only one woman. She was able to think about that, however subconsciously she did not want to think about that.

Very quickly she thought about the point that she was the one with thoughts and he did not have thoughts about her. In addition, he had also rejected her. Thinking about that, she had an indescribable feeling.

She had always assumed that she was not lacking when compared to that woman, as she would not feel inferior before meeting that woman. She had seen the portrait that he had painted. That woman was very beautiful and was even the most beautiful woman she had ever seen, however, she felt that she was not lacking either...

Women are obstinate and the more beautiful one was the more obstinate she was.

She was also following this trend, in addition she had believed in that firmly. She felt that she was still very rational. She believed that she was able to clearly understand what kind of person a man was. She would fight for the person that she had chosen, in addition it did not mean that she had to wed him.

AST 877 – Targeted, Sky Prison Sect, [Sky Prison Massacre]

The two of them slowly walked in the mountain valley, time to time frightening hordes of small animals and beasts. When the two of them were together they truly did not have anything to talk about.

Qing Shui discovered that he did not have anything that he wanted to talk to this lady about, while the lady had many things to say but was unable to speak. Although she had decided on what she wanted to do, she would not be that direct.

It was in fact Mu Qing that was feeling the most helpless, as she did not have a single bit of experience in male and female relationships. She really did not know what to do, however she was intelligent and rational. She did not wish for herself to have regrets, therefore she had reduced some of her restraint, however from the look of it the results were no good.

There were times where liking a person was very simple. Loving a person can be very simple too, however, sometimes loving a person was very hard. Even working hard one's entire life might not have any results. The matters of unrequited love and lack of interest were too many in the world.

Such a flower like her had met with a heartless person. If this was announced no one would believe it!

There still were some days left and rushing would botch up the

job, therefore the lady did not ask more on this question. Following this, she and Qing Shui started to talk about more relaxing topics and some simple information about him.

Women were very skilled at talking, at least she knew what words to say and what not to. What to ask and what absolutely cannot be asked. She would talk about some of her circumstances. She wanted to understand Qing Shui more and wanted him to understand her more. “How’s the Dong Family in the county city?” since they were already talking, Qing Shui started to ask more.

“Dong Family, how to put it? We’re in the top class within the city, however within this circle we are considered the weaker one.” replied the lady as she walked. She and Qing Shui walked shoulder to shoulder and from the look of it they seem to be well matched.

The girl was not shorter than Qing Shui and when her hair was worn in a high bun she was almost as tall as Qing Shui. Her slender and graceful physique radiated an ecstatic aura that made people go crazy.

This was an answer that Qing Shui could understand. The Dong Family was unable to compete with the Mu Family. Although they were in the same circle as the Mu Family, it was with some difficulty. However the Dong Family were already well off. After all, from amongst so many families, the Dong Family was able to rise up and stand up shows the might that they possessed. This did not happen just by a fluke. Without strength one cannot have fame or reputation, if not one would be harmed by this false reputation.

The Dong Family was strong, however it was a pity that their

number of people were not flourishing. When their population dropped, they would be unable to compete on the same level as a large family like the Mu Family. However, it does not mean that a family with fewer mouths would definitely be bullied.

As long as the family had people who were able to bear the heavy responsibility or had a frightening existence among their elder generation, there would be no one who would dare to provoke them. After all, if the expert were to seek revenge, even a big clan would have a headache.

“These are for you. Just pat them on your body to use them,” said the lady as she took out some crystal cards and handed them over to Qing Shui.

The crystal cards refined by a Beast Tamer. Qing Shui smiled as he took them from her. There were those that increase speed, increase strength, increase defense...

No wonder people would say that Beast Tamers were basically similar to Heavenly Talisman Masters. One was a talisman and the other was a crystal card. Both could boost the user or weaken their target. In addition the materials all came from demonic beasts.

When Qing Shui used the Descending Heavens Talisman, he did not know if the lady had seen it, however Qing Shui still took out a large amount of Heavenly Talismans and handed them to the lady. This was due to the fact that crystal cards and Heavenly Talismans do not conflict with one another.

The lady happily took them and said, “You truly know quite a few things. Never did I think that the words you said in the Jade Cloud Pavilion were true.”

“Within this region, is the Mu Family the greatest Alchemist Clan?” Qing Shui did not continue with the lady’s words, stopping for a while before asking his question with a smile.

“As of now we haven’t discovered anybody or any family that is better than the Mu Clan,” replied Mu Qing with certainty. When talking about refining demons, she was still very confident.

“Is it convenient for you to talk about what things can refining demons result in? Er, I’m also a Demon Refiner and would like to know what things can a Demon Refiner refine.” Qing Shui had all along been wanting to interact with some Demon Refiners about the knowledge of demon refining.

“You’re also a Demon Refiner?” this time it could be considered that Mu Qing was startled. There were many Demon Refiners in the capital city, however the majority of them did not have skills that were up to par. However, she felt that Qing Shui was different from them. She knew that anything that he had involved himself in, the result would definitely be perfected. Now he was saying that he was a Demon Refiner and that meant that he had unique understandings in refining demons.

“Refining Demons is in fact refining the essence of demonic beasts. Those who are not strong enough would choose to refine a portion of demonic beasts. For example, the head, the core, the heart, the bones, the blood and fluids...those who are strong can

choose to refine the entire demonic beast. When doing separate refining, the items obtained would be medicinal pills or some materials like pearls that can let demonic beasts regain their strength. There would be times where those crystal cards would appear,” replied the lady slowly as she looked at Qing Shui.

Qing Shui was also in shock now. He did not know that one could split the refining into parts. During the first time he was muddleheaded and refined the entire demonic beast. Furthermore, it was two strong demonic beasts.

“It’s best to refine the entire corpse of the demonic beast. That way, the items obtained will be greater. Furthermore the items would be of better quality than refining a certain portion. The most important thing is that there is a definite success rate of obtaining the Demonic Beast Origin Essence Soul Pearl of the demonic beast,” continued Mu Qing.

“Other than feeding to demonic beasts, what other use does the Demonic Beast Origin Essence Soul Pearl have?” asked Qing Shui after thinking about it.

The lady looked at Qing Shui, having already guessed it secretly. He was actually about to refine a Demonic Beast Origin Essence Soul Pearl. However it seemed to not be too much of a surprise. After laughing for awhile, she replied, “Other than feeding to demonic beasts, it can be used in the refinement of some medicinal pills.”

This had gone beyond Qing Shui’s expectations. He had never thought that the Demonic Beast Origin Essence Soul Pearl refined

from the demonic beast could also be used to refine medicinal pills. He estimated that it was used to refine some special or strong medicinal pills.

Unknowingly they had already walked for a very long distance, as the pace of a cultivator was much quicker than most people. Added with the fact that this was a mountain valley, seven or eight turns was enough to make people dizzy and turn back.

Suddenly, the lady stopped in her tracks, extending her hand and grabbing onto Qing Shui's sleeves.

“There are people!” said the lady softly.

Qing Shui tried to sense them using his Spiritual Sense and faintly sensed that there were indeed people, just that they were a bit far. The lady was able to sense them most likely due to her Lightning Bees.

“They have already discovered us. Qing Shui, don't you have a way to leave? You should leave first,” said the lady softly. Her voice was calm and tranquil. However Qing Shui discovered that she was controlling herself and in fact she was a little disturbed.

Qing Shui was now very curious, as Mu Qing definitely knew of those people that had yet to appear. What people were able to invoke such dread in her. Without moving an inch, he looked at the lady, waiting for her explanation.

“They are people of the Sky Prison Sect! We’re truly unlucky to have actually run into them.” replied the lady bitterly as she looked at Qing Shui, her absolutely beautiful face showing her helplessness.

“Sky Prison Sect?”

Qing Shui had heard of them before. They seemed to be a powerful existence within the Eastern Victory Divine Continent. At the Golden Buddha Temple he had heard about the powerful influences and the number one seemed to be the Sky Prison Sect.

“The Sky Prison Sect is an ancient sect and no one knows where their sect is. We only know that their members are very strong. In the earliest days they were the existence that represented justice and righteousness, the Sky Prison and would catch those heinous hoodlums and bad guys. Five thousand years ago the Sky Prison Sect had captured a large number of bad guys. However, the sect had underestimated these people. The prisoners had unknowingly used some method to become a branch of the Sky Prison Sect after staying there for a hundred years. After another hundred years, an absolute genius appeared in this branch. Two hundred years later, this “genius” captured the Sky Prison Sect into his hands. This allowed his branch to sit firmly until now. The people who control the Sky Prison Sect are all his later generations. It is said that he had obtained the absolute treasure of the Sky Prison Sect, the “Sky Prison Massacre” Mu Qing calmed down, when she saw Qing Shui, she was surprised to learn that her emotions actually slowly calmed down.

Although she knew that this man could not contend against the

Sky Prison Sect, She felt very calm when she was in his presense. He had never said more words than needed, as there was no use in showing off. However he would accomplish stunning and breathtaking things.

“Do you have a grudge with the people of the Sky Prison Sect?” asked Qing Shui softly as he looked at Mu Qing.

He did not know about the Sky Prison Sect, however the Mu Family was still alright. From the looks of it this Mu Clan was not afraid of the Sky Prison Sect. Perhaps it meant that the Sky Prison Sect did not dare to brazenly appear in the capital city.

“We don’t have a grudge. However, anyone that is targeted by them would not have a happy ending,” replied the lady while shaking her head.

As of now, Qing Shui could already sense the auras of those people. There were approximately twenty people. Their strength was not overly frightening, however they were at least all cultivators with one star of strength.

“They don’t seem to be that powerful?” asked Qing Shui doubtfully.

“Yes, this is the reason why the Sky Prison Sect is strong and enduring. What they train is the “Sky Prison Massacre”. It’s a technique to imprison people. Their might when collaborating is frightening. The “Sky Prison Massacre” is able to make them seemingly share the same body. Their strange positioning and

attacks have not been broken by anyone yet. This technique allows their strength to increase by a lot,” replied the lady while looking like she was pondering.

The lady’s words made Qing Shui think about a thing that he had guessed.

Array Techniques or something clever that had a different approach but same outcome, like blade arrays, sword arrays, spear arrays...

Among the techniques used by Qing Shui, there were many that touched upon the concepts of the Eight Trigram Book of Changes, especially the Eight Trigrams Orientation. Formations and the Eight Trigrams Orientation comes together. In addition there was the Yin and Yang and the Five Elements.

The Five Elements amalgamate into one, one would give birth to Yin and Yang. Yin and Yang would give birth to the Four Symbols. The Four Symbols would give birth to the Eight Trigrams Orientation. The Eight Trigrams Orientation would give birth to the 64 hexagrams of the Book of Changes. The 64 hexagrams of the Book of Changes would change into 384 divinations. 384 divinations would develop into the myriad of things.

“Big miss Mu indeed has a broad knowledge. The number one beauty of the county City not only has absolutely good looks, your cultivation and experience are also at the peak.”

Just at this time 22 people walked out from the two ends of the

mountain valley. Most of them were males of forty years and below. Looking very crude, wild and fearless, they had a fierce and violent aura.

Their leader was a rather handsome male. From the looks of it he was approximately thirty plus years old. He was tall and slender, sporting silver attire. On his face was a somewhat sinister expression, with the corner of his eyes faintly curling up, giving people a feeling of frivolity.

“Qing Shui, he is the expert of the Sky Prison Sect’s younger generation. Don’t underestimate him. This person is perverted and in addition is a coward. Basically, any Women who he has taken a fancy to would not be able to live. There are many people who call him the flower snipper,” ignoring the youth, Mu Qing said as she thought about Qing Shui.

“If your elder uncles can come, we have quite a numerical advantage over them. Although victory or defeat is uncertain, the majority of them are not as strong as us. A few of the elder uncles are quite a bit stronger than them,” replied Qing Shui as he tilted his head to look at her.

“There isn’t anything that is certain. If we can’t kill them instantly or we can’t break their technique, there would be simply no chance of victory,” said the lady with certainty while shaking her head.

AST 878 – Going Against The Seven Stars, Breaking The Saber Formation

Very quickly, the 22 of them surrounded the area. Each of them was holding a five-foot purplish green battle saber in his hands. Moreover, the positions they stood at were the positions of the seven stars...

There were three people in each position, and the young man was standing in the eye of the formation with three other people...

Although Qing Shui was not trained in the art of formations, everything appeared clearly in his mind. He could sense that a formless line of Qi was being connected between them, forming a whole. More importantly, the entire body could draw out the powers it received from the individual members...

So this was how a formation was like... Qing Shui was enlightened, and a hint of change occurred in his consciousness, as if it had gained some important knowledge. However, it was a pity that he didn't have the time to observe it at the moment.

Mu Qing stood next to Qing Shui, her mind in a chaotic state. These people were well-known, but for being people that others didn't wish to come across, especially not in a place like this.

Mu Qing had not expected to come across them. Although the Mu Clan did have quite a bit of influence in the city, it meant nothing in the Sky Penetrating Mountains. The only thing here that was important was one's abilities. If anything were to happen, no one

would be blamed. If one was to die without leaving even a corpse behind, how would others know who were the killers? They might not even know if these people were still alive.

“Miss Mu, do you still remember me?” The guy smiled and asked Mu Qing as he stood there, unmoving.

Qing Shui also smiled as he looked at the people in the surroundings, then at Mu Qing who appeared extremely unnatural. However, he was still inwardly thinking... Could the Sky Prison Sect be a sect which had relied on things similar to “formations” to become an influential faction?

“I have never met you. Why are you stopping us?” Mu Qing looked at the guy and frowned.

“Haha, I previously heard Miss Mu had said quite a bit about me, but why are you saying that you don’t know this friend? That makes me feel so sad. I do have a strong admiration for Miss Mu.” The guy looked at Mu Qing teasingly, a hint of wild glow flashing in his eyes.

Mu Qing once again frowned before saying gradually, “What on earth do you want?”

“What do I want? Haha, since you know me so well, you should know what I want. You’re the top beauty in the city, and I’ve taken a liking to you. So, what do you think I want? What do you think I should do?” The guy laughed, his unblinking gaze still fixed on Mu Qing.

“I’m sorry, I have someone I like. We’re leaving, please make way.” Mu Qing said unhappily.

“Miss Mu, this might have worked if were in the city. But it’s a pity that we’re in the Sky Penetrating Mountains and now, you only have one choice.” The man laughed, his gaze on Mu Qing like a predator looking at his prey.

“You can dream on. Things won’t go so easily for you.” Mu Qing bit her lips and said.

“Do you think that you can stop us with just the two of you? Let me tell you, you can forget about dying. If you die, all of your group dies as well. If you agree, I won’t hurt any of them. You should know my means very well, and that I do have the ability to do so.” The guy spoke with confidence. He liked the feeling of exerting control over other people.

Mu Qing bit her lips so hard that they started to bleed. Qing Shui knew that he could no longer stay silent. He took a step forward and stood in front of her, saying, “You guys aren’t men to be bullying a lady like this. In the future, you shouldn’t smile. You smile like an idiot.”

Qing Shui’s words caused everyone to be frozen in their tracks. No one had expected him to say this. Especially after hearing his last line, the guy froze and let out two dry laughs before he glared at Qing Shui.

“Lad, you doomed yourself the moment you stood together with Miss Mu,” The guy didn’t even try to conceal the killing intent in his eyes.

Mu Qing wanted to laugh, but she found it hard to do so. While it appeared that she had two options, she really only had one. It was not to give in, but rather to fight it out with him.

However, there were over twenty opponents who were all highly skilled, especially that young-looking guy. He was in no way weaker than her. Most importantly, they were all core disciples from the Sky Prison Sect. The guy even seemed to have some special status in the sect.

She gradually drew out her Rhinoceros Spirit Deity Sword, fully prepared for a fight. She also called out her four Golden Beasts.

“Haha, this is the decision you have made? It’s useless, even if you were to call out a hundred of them. Remember, I won’t let you go even if you die.” A hint of bloodthirst flashed in the guy’s eyes.

“Assemble the formation!” The guy let out a soft bellow.

The people who had surrounded Qing Shui and Mu Qing started to move in a strange footwork pattern in a three-meter radius around them. At the same time, they also started to wave their sabers strangely.

In that instant, Qing Shui could sense that the pressure of his

surroundings was escalating, and that twenty-odd people seemed to have been connected as one. Qing Shui now knew why Mu Qing was frowning. If they had no way to break through this, it would be really hard to have a fighting chance. Even if they were to call out everyone from the cave, it would probably still be useless unless they were over ten times stronger than the opponents.

What a powerful saber formation.

Earlier, Qing Shui had heard the guy shouting out for the formation to be started. It seemed that this should be a saber formation.

“This is a saber formation!” Looking at Mu Qing, Qing Shui said softly after ascertaining that it was indeed called a formation here.

“That’s right, but there’s nothing we can do against it. I don’t even know how to fight it. It seems as though no matter where we were attack it, it’d be impregnable.” Mu Qing looked at the people from the Sky Prison Sect who continued on moving inwards.

“A formation makes use of time, favorable climatic conditions, human relations, and the linking martial technique in order to amplify its power by several times. The most important thing is the positioning.” Qing Shui said, calm and collected.

“You know about formations?” Mu Qing looked at Qing Shui in astonishment, a hint of joy in her voice.

“I don’t!” Qing Shui said calmly.

Hearing Qing Shui’s reply, Mu Qing appeared to be slightly disappointed. She had thought that he had known about formations and that they might have been able to break through the opponent’s’ formation. However, it seemed like he was not a person who knew everything.

“But I’m still able to break this formation.” Qing Shui continued, his tone filled with certainty.

In the blink of an eye, Mu Qing’s expression changed from that of disappointment to that of joy. That feeling made her forget about everything else as she grabbed Qing Shui’s hand, “Really?”

Her tone was one of great surprise, or rather, that of great joy. It was a change from hell to heaven. She now seemed to trust this guy, and even liked the surprises he brought her.

Her soft touch made once again made Qing Shui’s heart skip a beat, as he lowered his head to look at her hand. The lady anxiously let go off his hand once again, her face flushed red, causing Qing Shui to lost his sense momentarily.

The guy opposite him seemed even more infuriated after seeing this. To think that this guy would let the lady from Mu Clan get so close to him. He was so angry that he immediately shouted to the others, “Kill that gigolo!”

Qing Shui quickly drew his Big Dipper Sword and used his other hand to grab Mu Qing's wrist, urging her to call back her demonic beasts.

Mu Qing was hit by anxiety, but another feeling was growing in her heart. She quickly called back the Golden Beasts.

“Follow me. There's no need for you to do anything.” Qing Shui said softly before grabbing Mu Qing and dashing out, going against the flow of the seven stars.

Seven Star Armored Vest!

Qing Shui's footwork was very fast and profound. As Mu Qing followed Qing Shui, she felt that the pressure was getting increasingly weaker. The Big Dipper Sword in Qing Shui's hand also quickly blocked the people who attacked and pushed them back.

From the start, the guy had not moved at all but just looked at Qing Shui. However, his expression of astonishment was gradually turning into that of fear.

He was standing in the supporting spot of the formation and could not move. If he did, the entire formation would be messed up. His position was very profound, and if Qing Shui were to attack him, he would naturally be stopped by the others. Basically, as long as the others were still alive, it would be very hard to attack him.

In fact, most people would think of attacking the person in this position right from the start. This was actually the most stupid idea.

However, Qing Shui was not ignorant and knew how to break the formation. Adding on to the essence of his Taichi, he could push off all the blades in his surroundings. His technique was like a fish in the water, as he headed towards an inconspicuous spot.

The three people in that position followed Qing Shui, but did not attack. They were in a position that was easily neglected by others, but that was the direction Qing Shui headed in.

It was the second Eye in the entire saber formation. It was also the best way out in the event that one couldn't directly wipe out the entire saber formation.

Mighty Elephant Stomp!

Qing Shui's foot landed strongly on the ground, and a huge impact wave was unleashed. At the same time, two Frosted Iron Balls also shot out rapidly.

Ding ding!

For the first time, Qing Shui's hidden weapons and Mighty Elephant Stomp were blocked easily.

The saber formation was really formidable...

Although his Mighty Elephant Stomp was at the strength of ten stars, twenty of them shared the burden. Moreover, this formation could also help divert away part of the strength of the attacks they received. Like what the other party had said, it would be useless even if they blindly attacked with even more people.

The power of this saber formation was that it could block off many of the attacks from weapons with essences incorporated into them. It could even block off poison weapons.

Formations were really good stuff!

Sword of Sixth Wave!

Qing Shui's sword impacts landed on the sword of one of the three in the position. This was the weakest spot in the entire saber formation!

He then quickly retreated!

Qing Shui grabbed onto Mu Qing. With each round, he would use the Sword of Sixth Wave to attack that same spot, and on the third attempt, he killed one of them!

This was like the [seventh inch of a snake's body](#), or a person's throat. The entire saber formation crumbled, losing its formidable effect.

An old Chinese saying was that a snake's heart was at the seventh

inch from its head, and one would be able to kill the snake instantly when it was struck at this critical position. Nowadays, it's used as an idiom to describe the critical or weakest points of events.

Without their saber formation, these people became like dragons who had been demoted to snakes. Qing Shui's hands didn't stop and he slashed out his Big Dipper Sword towards their throats like a venomous snake, as he unleashed another Mighty Elephant Stomp as well.

He would not give them time to set up the formation once again. Who knew if they had an even more powerful formation? It was safer to just kill them off.

Mu Qing's Mystical Connection Divine Sword was not to be outdone either!

AST 879 – Falling Into Hell And Then Soaring To Heaven, Fire Bird's Metamorphosis

When the weakest supporting positions of the saber formation were destroyed, Qing Shui and Mu Qing immediately killed off a few of their opponents in a few seconds. Meanwhile, with well-coordinated movements, the remaining opponents crowded around the young-looking man.

Without their saber formation, the average strength of their opponents was about one to three stars. Only a few had strength above three stars. The only exception was that young man. What Qing Shui was uncertain about was that young man's capabilities. That man gave off a dangerous aura, just like a poisonous snake. Most importantly, that man was a core member of the Sky Prison Sect.

Since things had escalated to this point, Qing Shui couldn't spare anyone, thus he simply rushed forward.

Petal Rain Under the Skies!

Fearing that the situation might turn sour if he didn't end things quickly, Qing Shui decisively used his strongest Hidden Weapon Technique. He was confident in this technique and did not forget to additionally imbue the attack with poison. These opponents were not inferior to strong demonic beasts, especially because they were backed by Sky Prison Sect.

After they had casually killed off four of their opponents, there were still 18 people left. As these people were clumped together, Qing Shui's Petal Rain Under the Skies managed to efficiently kill off 12 more enemies. In the blink of an eye the tables were turned and there were only 6 opponents left.

Qing Shui's flash-like massacre stunned his remaining opponents. Before they could react, Qing Shui swiftly summoned his Thunderous Beast. A thunderbolt mercilessly struck one of his opponents, killing him instantly. Following this, Qing Shui's Thunderous Beast unleashed a Violet Lightning Strike at the young-looking man, who had finally started to react.

Unfortunately for him, the Violet Lightning Strike had a 100% chance of paralyzing the target, the man did not even have the time to dodge.

In that instant, Qing Shui rushed in front of the man. As the man stood paralyzed by the effect of the Violet Lightning Strike, Qing Shui unhesitantly slashed open his throat. Even though the remaining men managed to land their attacks on Qing Shui, he was unfazed as he had his Seven Star Armored Vest.

The remaining four men still hadn't come to terms with their situation. With the death of that young man, they were startled again. With Qing Shui impeccable coordination with his Thunderous Beast, the four men were quickly eliminated.

The whole battle ended very quickly. Apart from the time Qing Shui used to disrupt the formation, it only took a few minutes to totally clean up the remaining trash.

Mu Qing fell into a daze as if she had not recovered from the shock of how the situation had unfolded. When she came back to her senses, her surroundings were already quiet.

Qing Shui looked behind and said to Mu Qing, “We should leave, it isn’t safe to stay here.”

They left the corpses on the ground. Wild demonic beasts would quickly solve that problem for them, it could even be considered a sky burial!

Qing Shui had always wondered what he should do if was unable to see through a particular formation.

What should he do if he didn’t understand the Five Elements Orientation or Eight Trigrams Orientation? If he was not able to break this formation, what method would he have used to deal with it?

Would he still be able to overcome it?

Formations were like mysteries wrapped within mysteries. He wondered if his Nine Continent Boots could help him escape a formation since there was a rumor that the Star Chasing Moon Stepping Boots could actually do that...

Today, he had finally witnessed the formidable potential of formations. Qing Shui decided that he needed to learn more about

formations in the future. Even if he could not set up a formation, it would be good enough if he knew how to deal with enemies who used formations.

“Are there many people who know how to use formations?” Qing Shui asked Mu Qing.

“Not many. But there is a community of them. Just like Talismans Masters, Demon Refiners, Alchemists, and Beast Tamers, they belong to a specialized branch of techniques. Their numbers are small but they are very powerful,” Mu Qing replied cheerfully.

She was overjoyed. Despite everything, this outcome came as a great surprise to her. She had already prepared herself for the worst case scenario but she had never expected that her fortune would turn for the better.

Falling into Hell and then soaring to Heaven!

After they returned to the cave, they quickly checked their surroundings to ensure that nobody was following them. After all, it would take some time for the people from Sky Prison Sect to begin to look for them. Once they return to the capital city, nobody could prove anything, especially if they insisted that they did not kill those people. In a place like Sky Penetrating Mountains, where even a powerful clan like the Cheng Clan could be wiped out, what more could be said for that group of people? Even though the power of formations could be very impressive, there was still a limit to their effectiveness. For example, formations could be limited by the maximum number of people it could employ, the

strength of the individual members in each position, the level of synergy that could be achieved and the maximum strength that it possessed. Facing an opponent whose strength far exceeds their combined strength would only result in their formation being destroyed with a single blow.

When one faced absolute power, everything else became illusory.

However, legends told of formations like Thousand Kills Formation, Big Dipper Formation, Nine Palace Death Formation, Tiangang Formation, Seven Stars Eight Trigrams Formation, and Five Elements Great Formation. These legendary formations could have up to ten thousand positions or even more.

Qing Shui felt slightly uneasy when he compared the saber formation to those heaven-defying formations. There were really many extraordinary talents in the World of the Nine Continent. Qing Shui wondered how many experts a powerful formation master could defeat...

There were countless paths to reach the Heavenly Dao, and the path of formations was indeed a viable path to the top.

After they returned to the cave, both of them had a mutual understanding to remain silent. They both knew the seriousness of this matter so they did not want to risk it by letting anyone else know. Besides, no one would even suspect that Mu Qing had the ability to eliminate that 'Flower Crusher' and his gang.

This was quite a good cover since it was very common for people

to go missing or die when they venture into Sky Penetrating Mountains. In the end, the disappearance of that group of people would be blamed on demonic beasts.

Originally, Qing Shui only wanted to survey the area himself, he had not expected that such a thing would happen. Those people had been followed Qing Shui and Mu Qing for a long time, waiting for both of them to walk deep into the Sky Penetrating Mountains before they took action. However, that group hadn't foreseen that they would be ones to die in the mountains.

If they were quick, they would reach 100 thousand li into Sky Penetrating Mountains after slightly more than one month, but Qing Shui wanted to leave the group as he wanted to travel even more quickly to look for the Sky Penetrating Grass.

When they returned, night had not fallen but they spent the afternoon in the cave. Mu Qing continuously checked for movements outside and her Lightning Bees stayed outside to monitor the situation. She had to make sure that no one knew that they were here because if anyone spotted the corpses of those Sky Prison Sect members and found them here, they would definitely be suspicious since one of the dead was that 'Flower Crusher'.

Once Qing Shui returned to his tent, he delved into his sea of consciousness. When he was trying to break the formation, he had felt a mysterious change within his sea of consciousness. It was as if there was something there. Previously, he couldn't find a chance to investigate but now that he had the time, he wanted to see what had happened.

Within his sea of consciousness, there was a new image but it was gray and the description was also blurred. He could only see two words: Formation Destroyer!

Qing Shui was stunned, was this the result of his enlightenment about formations? Why couldn't he use it?

Qing Shui quickly figured out the issue. The techniques he had gotten through his enlightenment could only be used when their images were lit up. Since this image was still unlit, it meant that he had not met the requirements to learn that skill. It should have appeared at a later time but it was triggered much earlier, so he could not use it....

Qing Shui stared blankly at the gray image and thought, "This Formation Destroyer could most likely only be used when I breakthrough the 7th Heavenly Layer but isn't there any way to learn it before that?"

Since Qing Shui had discovered the power of formations, he grew very interested in it. Somehow, he found out that it was possible that he would learn a relevant technique in the future.

The techniques that appeared in his sea of consciousness were all powerful, this was definitely not an exception. However, Qing Shui was sure that it would not be easy, but learning one or two of these formations would definitely be a pretty good killer move.

Besides, learning about formations would help him see through other formations more easily if he was stuck in the same situation.

Perhaps he would even be capable of destroying them immediately.

Unfortunately, this was not the right time. He could foresee that he should be able to pick it up quite quickly since he understood the principles of Eight Trigrams and the like. It would definitely become a great asset to him in the near future.

At night, Qing Shui returned to his tent and entered the Realm of the Violet Jade Immortal after dinner. He even looked forward to it.

Once he entered the realm, he took out his Berserk Dragon King Origin Essence Soul Pearl and sensed the essence of the violent nature inside of it. Initially, he had wanted to feed it to his Diamond Gigantic Elephant but then he realized that the Five Elements of his Diamond Gigantic Elephant was not really suitable for this pearl. Thus, he called the Fire Bird over, as the pearl should be most effective on it.

Even though a particular medicine or enhancer might not be suitable, it didn't mean that it could not be consumed, it only meant that the effects would be greatly reduced. But that didn't pose a problem to Qing Shui since the Fire Bird was the right demonic beast which could consume that pearl.

He threw the pearl directly at the Fire Bird's head. It swallowed the pearl and let out a clarion bird call. Qing Shui could sense the Fire Bird's clear joy.

Thereafter, the Fire Bird circled the sky continuously. Flashes of

fiery glow appeared on its back and its call grew louder and louder.

Suddenly, the Fire Bird paused in the middle of its flight, as if it was frozen in place. Its large wings spread open as its body maintained its 600 incline. Its head faced the sky.

A magnificent fiery glow enveloped its body, while a bright call rang out in the air. Its call vaguely resembled the call of a phoenix.

“It’s a breakthrough! What a powerful aura!” At this point, Qing Shui felt very emotional.

The strength of his flying mount was very important to him. Not only was the Fire Bird his mount and a demonic beast that he used in battle, it was also his closest companion and his most loyal battling companion.

The fiery glow continued. Midway, there were even flashes of golden light. Its strength continued to surge upwards. Since the Berserk Dragon King’s Five Elements matched the Fire Bird, the effects were even more profound.

“Kawwwww!”

The Fire Bird continued its birdsong and its calls became increasingly melodious. This time, it did not cry out in pain as it evolved. The strength it had gained this round was immense.

This continued for fifteen minutes before the Fire Bird gradually

calmed down. However, Qing Shui was shocked! Its usual fiery red feathers had become a slightly duller shade, as if it had been covered by a layer of black ash. This gave Qing Shui a rather strange feeling.

Was this something to do with the Berserk Dragon King Origin Essence Soul Pearl?

But it did not seem that way to Qing Shui. Regardless, Qing Shui now felt that this color gave his Firebird a more tyrannical presence compared to the bright red. Since he did not find this color unsuitable, he was relieved.

Qing Shui measured the Fire Bird's strength and found that its base strength had already reached one and a half star. This was a huge increase!

Under the effects of its Phoenix Dance, which was a zero energy consumption passive skill, its strength would increase by one fold. With its Phoenix Dance of the Nine Heavens mode and the support of the Spirit Gathering Lamp, the strength of the Fire Bird could reach a terrifying 12 stars.

12 stars! Qing Shui was startled for a moment. He was extremely satisfied with this. The Fire Bird's increased strength also led to a massive breakthrough in its speed!

AST 880 – Fire Bird’s Powerful Battle Technique, Qing Shui’s Depression

The Fire Bird had now achieved the strength of one and a half stars. Although it only had half the strength of the Thunderous Beast, it could attack just as effectively as the Thunderous Beast.

Qing Shui activated his Fiery Golden Eyes to see the changes in the Fire Bird’s battle techniques. Its powerful battle techniques was why the Fire Bird could now attack as effectively as the Thunderous Beast.

Superior Flight: A flying ability exclusive to the Fire Bird. Incomparable endurance and speed that is top-notch amongst flying beasts. Enables high-speed flight over an extended period of time.

Qing Shui took a glance and noticed that the flying skill had an additional word to it – Superior. There were no changes to the description at the back. However, Qing Shui felt there must be some changes to it. Nonetheless, Qing Shui didn’t bother to study it any further as was good news.

Hell’s Inferno: The Fire Bird activates a powerful flame attack. This pitch black flame is capable of burning everything down and possesses a fearful destructive ability. This is the legendary Black Phoenix’s powerful battle technique.

“It has changed. It has all changed.....” Qing Shui looked at the Hell Inferno’s description, which had an additional ‘the legendary

Black Phoenix's battle technique' description appended at the end of it.

Qing Shui suddenly recalled the changes in the Fire Bird's feather. This change seemed to resonate with this new description. Could it be that the Fire Bird possessed the bloodline of the Black Phoenix and had started to awaken?

Black Phoenix, also known as Hell's Phoenix, Dark Phoenix, Black Ember Phoenix, was a more evil type of Phoenix. They were formidable and known for their powerful Hell's Inferno skill. They could defeat their opponents just by using that skill.

Phoenix Dance of the Nine Heavens: When the Fire Bird uses Phoenix Dance of the Nine Heavens, its flame damage will be doubled and the effects will last for half an hour. This technique can be used twice a day. During this period of time, damage taken will be reduced by many folds.

"They have all leveled up!" Qing Shui felt as if he had struck gold. No. In fact, to him this felt way better than that. Half an hour's time was sufficient to end a normal battle. Moreover, this skill could be used twice. This meant that it could last in actual combat for an hour at once.

Qing Shui continued reading on with excitement.

Phoenix Dance: Passive battle skill with zero consumption. Tempered from Phoenix Dance of the Nine Heavens during the bloodline awakening. Strength is permanently increased by a fold

and the consumption of all battle techniques is halved.

This was great as he no longer needed to worry about prolonged battles. Besides, he still had the Vital Essence Pill, although there was a limit in consuming the pills. Whether it was a human or a beast, one should not overdose on it as it could overwork the physical body. It would be fine when an appropriate amount is consumed because overexerting the body occasionally could be beneficial.

Phoenix Paradise: When the Fire Bird suffers a fatal injury, there will be a 30% chance of it being resurrected from the flames. A successful resurrection is as good as a transformation, as its strength will be increased by a fold.

Although Phoenix Paradise was extremely powerful, Qing Shui hoped that the Fire Bird would never be forced to use it. Although a 30% chance was not little, it was still extremely risky. Even if strength could be increased by a fold after the resurrection, Qing Shui would rather avoid the chance. He wasn't going to let Fire Bird risk it.

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The next morning, Qing Shui woke up and did his morning practice a short distance from the cave. As for the corpses from yesterday, they should be gone by now since the Sky Penetrating Mountains had demonic beasts. It was impossible for the corpses to linger around there for more than fifteen minutes. Although those corpses were poisonous, they still couldn't escape the fate of being scavenged by those poison beasts and poisonous insects.

Soon enough, people started to come out one after another. A few elderly men were out for their morning practices too. Although Mu Qing came out as well, Qing Shui had his eyes shut and didn't react. Instead, he slowly practiced his Taichi Fists.

Qing Shui gave others the impression of being slow and casual, yet his movements were indescribably harmonious, very striking and impressive. It was as if he could blend into nature.

Way of Nature!

After breakfast, everyone pressed on with their journey once again. But this time, they took a detour to avoid the area where they fought the day before. There was no need to pass by there.

The deeper they went, the more dangerous it would be. This in turn caused their speed to decrease relatively tremendously. Luckily, the woman had Lightning Bees which saved the others from a lot of trouble.

Everyone was anxious and always on their toes. Before they realized it, twenty days had already passed. They were now 80,000 li inside, and almost reaching 90,000 li.

Twenty days had passed and Qing Shui felt that they had spent quite some time there. In these twenty days, the group had gained a handful amount of items, but it was Mu Qing and the others that had gained a lot. On the other hand, he basically gained nothing.

Although the woman insisted on sharing a portion with Qing Shui, he firmly stood his ground, declining the offer. Nothing was more important than obtaining a Sky Penetrating Grass, let alone Raging Blow, Sunstone and the Portrait of Beauty. Therefore, Qing Shui would never accept anything else again from that woman no matter what.

In these twenty days, they had encountered quite a large number of demonic beasts. They would basically kill a group of demonic beasts once every two days. Fortunately, Qing Shui's Soulshake Bell was very effective in the current situation.

He wondered how the woman had survived in the past. From their recent experiences, he realized that this didn't seem easy for them. Nonetheless, it was just a daunting experience without any mishap. Even without the Soulshake Bell, they could still make it through.

Perhaps, they had barely made it through before. She had the Lightning Bee, which allowed her to maximise the geographical advantage and to prepare ahead of time. Moreover, the woman had also scattered some medicine powder once.

The demonic beast that was covered in this powder would instantly become frenzied, flee, or even become unable to get up. He had only just realized that this was the 'Bone Powder' that could occasionally be obtained from refining demons. Not only that, it had to be a high-leveled demonic beasts and only their bones were refined. It was a very precious item.

This was also the reason why Qing Shui had never obtained the ‘Bone Powder’. It was the essence that could be found in the bones of powerful demonic beasts. The violent power in these bones could cause madness to the lower level beasts and it could only work on beasts with a lower rank.

Although Qing Shui was very remarkable in refining demons, he had very little knowledge on the matter. His meeting with Mu Qing had allowed him to learn a lot from her. He would ask her some questions from time to time and Mu Qing would always provide him with a detailed explanation.

It was the same situation regarding the ‘Bone Powder’, if he hadn’t met Mu Qing, it would probably take him forever to find out about it.

Other than that, the Fire Bird had performed powerfully in battle. Those raging flames of the Hell’s Inferno made Qing Shui feel extremely pleasant. Even though it attained the might of 12 stars under the effect of the Spirit Gathering Lamp, the Hell’s Inferno’s terrifying battle strength had already exceeded 12 stars.

Everyone, including Mu Qing, watched the Fire Bird with admiration. Its performance was very powerful and very incisive. It was able to kill instantly and slaughter at an astonishing speed.

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Before Qing Shui’s eyes stood a mighty mountain; majestically tall and straight. It was way taller than the surrounding

mountains. In addition, it was fully covered in forests that were mostly made up of ancient towering trees.

Qing Shui felt that the Spiritual Qi on this mountain was much more abundant than anywhere else. There was a saying that ‘The higher the mountain, the more abundant the Spiritual Qi. The deeper the water, the more abundant the Spiritual Qi was.’ Hence, he decided to roam around the mountain to search for treasures. It would be great if he could find the Sky Penetrating Grass that he needed. If he did manage to find it, he could leave this depressing place immediately. Otherwise, he planned on parting ways with Mu Qing and the rest on this mountain.

From time to time, Mu Qing would survey the surroundings and Qing Shui would expand his spiritual sense. Although ‘Lightning Bee’ had a good vision, its vision was slightly weaker when looking at longer distances. If enemies were hidden, they might go undetected. Lightning Bee was only as good as a pair of eyes, it could still be fooled by hidden opponents.

In comparison, spiritual sense was generally stronger than its vision as it detects consciousness. But of course, that didn’t mean spiritual sense would definitely be able to detect everything. The strong could hide from it. But for those weaker in strength, it was basically hopeless to hide from it even if they tried to physically conceal themselves.

Of course, if one had a mysterious cultivation, perhaps they might be able to avoid being detected by some else’s spiritual sense. But there was a limit to it, the disparity between the individual’s strengths could not be too great. Moreover, there was

always an exception to everything, and nothing was definite.

The Treasure Hunting Pig traveled back and forth around the compound, squeaking occasionally. It didn't sound like a pig at all.

The bright sun was up, yet the surrounding was very quiet. The silence was somewhat disturbing. Every now and then, the beasts would roar. Their roars echoed through the sky like the sound of muffled thunder.

This made everyone stressed and tense. It was so deep in the mountains, even a warrior would be terrified.

Within the deepest part of the mountains was the terrifying Sky Penetrating Mountains. The surroundings were covered with ancient forest. It was incomparable to the old forests found in the deep mountains in his previous world. The old forests in his previous world were already indescribably terrifying, let alone the forests here.

The skillful ones were indeed brave!

Rather, it was because of their cultivation. Only cultivation could make a person daring and fearless. This was true for Qing Shui too, as he still had many more demonic beasts, as well as magical treasures and powerful techniques in his possession. These were the things that gave Qing Shui the mettle to travel deeper into the mountains alone to search for the Sky Penetrating Grass.

There were a lot of natural treasures in this mountain. The Treasure Hunting Pig's occasional squeaks brought joy to the group, staving their nervousness.

Humans die in pursuit of wealth, birds die in pursuit of food!

Ironically, this was a very normal sense of worth. Every person, more or less, had the same mindset. Humans actually have the spirits to take risks. It was precisely due to uncertainty that humans would take risks out of desperation.

They had come across quite a number of beasts as they were slowly approaching the top of the mountain. However, they were not in a flock. These beasts were quite powerful but unfortunately for them, they could only flee when they came face to face with Qing Shui's group.

Squeak Squeak.....

Once again, the familiar sound of the Treasure Hunting Pig rang out, which made everyone gather around. Everyone, including Qing Shui, were stunned when they saw the treasure that came into their view. It was the Sky Penetrating Grass.

Furthermore, there were ten of them.....

It was a shame that they were a little too small. According to Qing Shui's knowledge of medicinal herbs, they were only approximately three hundred to five hundred years old. This made

Qing Shui's heart sank. If it required another 3,000 years, that would mean he'd still had to wait another 11 to 12 years even with the Realm of Violet Jade Immortal's passage of time.

Although he was very disappointed, Qing Shui still approached them and moved the whole patch of land. Under everyone's surprised gaze, he put the patch of land into the Realm of Violet Jade Immortal.

Up until now, Qing Shui's interspatial item was still a mystery to them. It was known that no living creature, including plants, could be stashed into the Interspatial Silk Sachet.

Everyone actually knew that what Qing Shui owned was not an Interspatial Silk Sachet, as interspatial items would not be able to contain living beings. Therefore, even if Qing Shui had only temporarily put it in there for the time being, it was evident that his interspatial item was extremely powerful.

AST 881 – Separation, Jade Spirit Fruit?

Snow Lion King

Qing Shui heaped the entire patch of earth containing the Sky Penetrating Grasses into the Realm of the Violet Jade Immortal. Everyone looked at him bewilderedly, but they could only laugh awkwardly without mentioning the obvious. Even if they tried to tell him something, they wouldn't be able to express their words clearly. In the end, they gave up.

Even though Qing Shui was a bit disappointed, he was nonetheless happy to have found the rare medicinal herbs at last. If he still couldn't find some Sky Penetrating Grass of more than 5,000 Years as proceeded to explore the mountain, the ones he had acquired would suffice. As long as he was able to acquire any kind of Sky Penetrating Grass, there was hope. 12 years may seem long, but the Sky Penetrating Grass would eventually grow into a medicinal herb of 5,000 Years.

Qing Shui felt better after thinking it through. Those medicinal herbs could still be of use after a period of growth. Sky Penetrating Grass that was less than a 1,000 years old were essentially worthless and useless – only those that were 3,000 to 5,000 years old could be regarded as treasures of Heaven and Earth.

However, 3,000 Years Sky Penetrating Grass would still be less effective than 5,000 Years variants. The 3,000 Years Sky Penetrating Grass were proven to grant approximately 50 years of lifespan. The 5,000 Years variants, however, would be more effective, increasing a person's lifespan by much more than 50 years. Consequently, no one suspected anything when Qing Shui

took away the 300 to 500 Years Sky Penetrating Grass.

Moreover, his goal for climbing these mountains was ultimately the Sky Penetrating Grass. But if he had to, he would still give up a Sky Penetrating Grass of more than 5,000 years to someone who needed them more. Mu Qing had already done it, and she had given it to him unconditionally. However, both of them were oblivious to their current situation as they struggled to clear up their own feelings for each other.

Of course, Qing Shui would willingly do the same. From that moment when Mu Qing gave up the Sky Penetrating Grass for him, he knew she was a determined person. There weren't many who would give up such a rare medicinal herb for someone they had met only a few days ago. The temptation of the Sky Penetrating Grass was certainly strong, yet she was able to resist her desires for it unwaveringly.

Soon after that, the group continued their search at the peak of the mountain. Some of them found a batch of medicinal herbs, and some were able to unearth some unique metals. The group finally stopped and descended from the mountain after they basically scoured the entire peak.

By the time they reached their camp, it was already the afternoon. Everyone ate some lunch and engaged in idle conversations as they settled themselves at the foot of the mountain. Meanwhile, Qing Shui was hesitating as he struggled to think of how to explain his decision to the group members.

It was time for Qing Shui to part ways with this group!

“We’ve traveled about 100,000 li into the mountains. Why don’t we part our ways from here? I will continue on forward, so please head back to safety.” Qing Shui faced the group and spoke his words calmly.

All of them sank into silence, while some turned to look at Mu Qing for an answer. In a short amount of time, they had forged a bond similar to that of a family, adapting to each other’s habits and characteristics without a problem. Now that Qing Shui had decided to risk his life by continuing forward, an indescribable feeling overwhelmed their heart and it felt quite uncomfortable. After all, he would only have a 10% chance of survival from here onwards.

“Qing Shui, I don’t know how to stop you. It’s too dangerous inside, so please stop. Based on your current ability, I suggest that you venture forth at a later date. Who knows, maybe we might find a Sky Penetrating Grass somewhere else or in a canal.” Mu Qing looked at Qing Shui with an expression of concern.

“Thank you. I know you are all worried for me, but I don’t intend to die so quickly. I believe that I will be able to survive from here onwards.” Despite his adamant decision, he felt warmth in his heart, as he knew that someone was genuinely concerned for his life.

For Qing Shui, it honestly felt great since he didn’t have any relatives or friends in the Eastern Victory Divine Continent when he first came here. With the exception to Dong Yan and Sun Yan, the closest relationship he had had would be his relationship with

the members of the Mu Clan.

In other words, Qing Shui already considered the Mu Clan as one of his friends.

Mu Qing gave a low sigh and said: “Then please be careful. I’m uncertain about what’s ahead. When you come back later on, please come and find me in the Mu Clan and let me know, alright? I will have a celebration for you.”

“Alright, I will.” Qing Shui smiled.

This meal had quickly turned into a farewell meal. Luckily, Qing Shui told them after they had eaten. Otherwise, everyone would lose their appetite in such a gloomy atmosphere.

“Take care, and please be extra careful. I will wait for your return!” Mu Qing locked her eyes with Qing Shui, as she said in a soft voice.

Qing Shui’s heart skipped a beat. He gave a firm nod to this beautiful woman as her words resounded in his mind. Her words felt amicable, but he understood her real intentions judging from her words.

He waved goodbye to the members of the Mu Clan and proceeded on his journey into the deeper parts of the forest. At the same time, he called out to them and said: “Be careful, you guys. Take care.”

Even after Qing Shui's silhouette had disappeared into the forest, Mu Qing didn't turn back and stood there dumbfounded. She felt dazed and confused, it was as if she would lose Qing Shui forever.

However, she knew that only time could tell between Qing Shui and herself. Besides, it was best to let nature take its course. She convinced herself that she hadn't fallen in love with him, so what would become of them would be left to the hands of destiny.

"He is the man among men, my girl. If you can't capture his heart now, it'll be difficult to do so in the future. Soon, he will rise up to the heavens and become the top among all martial warriors," an old woman emerged from the group and said with a benevolent smile.

She was one of the two old women who had looked after Mu Qing ever since she was a little girl.

"Grandma, he didn't seem to like me that much....." Mu Qing gave an awkward laugh. She didn't know what to think of her own words. This was the first man who had shown indifference to her after she had grown into a fine woman. She tried to convince herself that she was only curious about his behavior. Mu Qing believed her heart would heal accordingly with the passage of time.

"Heh heh, it's not that he didn't like you. He has too many burdens and does not have the ability to make room for romance. Don't underestimate his calm composure. More than anyone, he has been through a lot from bearing everything on his shoulders all alone." The old woman's eyes flashed with wisdom as she looked

at Mu Qing, feeling proud of the woman she had become.

She gazed lovingly at Mu Qing as if she was her own child. The old woman never had a child of her own and she had never married throughout her entire life. Mu Qing was essentially the life of her soul.

Everyone has something precious within their hearts. That preciousness was a sort of backbone and a support to their lives. It was a reminder to stay true to who they were. This old woman's precious treasure was none other than Mu Qing. She had dedicated her life to grant an impeccable honor and happiness upon the young woman she had cared for since young.

“Forget it. God will decide for us. Grandma, let's go back. We have reaped so many good rewards for our efforts.” Mu Qing smiled at the old woman.

“Alright.” The old woman laughed and nodded. A faint smile appeared at the corner of her eyes as she looked at Mu Qing.

.....

Qing Shui didn't have the Lightning Bees but he did have his spiritual sense. He also had a considerably strong spiritual energy, as well as the Realm of the Violet Jade Immortal in his possession. Even if he were to face a dire situation inside the deeper parts of the mountain, he would still have various ways to evade danger or escape from threatening demonic beasts.

Qing Shui gained a surge of confidence after gaining a considerable amount of spiritual energy. He would have no problem avoiding – and killing – powerful demonic beasts or martial warriors as long as his powers were not restricted like that encounter he had with the woman in the crystal coffin.

He also had the company of his Thunderous Beast and Fire Bird, as well as the formidable Soulshake Bell. Thus, his days after parting with Mu Qing were quite carefree. If a demonic beast appeared and decided to attack Qing Shui, he would be more than happy to eradicate it instantly and turn the corpse into materials for demon refining, talisman drawing, or medicinal refinement.

In the blink of an eye, half a month had passed.

By now, Qing Shui was 150,000 li into the mountain range. He didn't spend a lot of time seeking treasures, so he was able to venture into the mountains with agility. All he cared about was getting further – the deeper he went, the better.

Qing Shui had a hunch that he would be able to find a Sky Penetrating Grass of 5,000 years or more at around 280,000 to 300,000 li. This was because he knew that someone was able to find a Sky Penetrating Grass of more than 5,000 Years at the range of about 300,000 li. If necessary, he would go as far as 500,000 li to try and find the grass. Should he bump into a difficult situation, he could always escape into the Realm of the Violet Jade Immortal or use his Nine Continents Steps to run away quickly.

Qing Shui had been inside the large and dense forest for five days already. The deeper he ventured into the forest, the more difficult

it was for him to find the exit. The trees here stood tall in a towering stature. They were about 100 meters in height and their trunks were shockingly thick. There was practically no light here, and darkness consumed the entire forest. The dense leaves formed a makeshift roof, blocking any form of light from illuminating the ground.

The forest was filled with the subtle scent of ancient wood. Qing Shui would fly up to the sky once in awhile, advancing towards the inner mountain on top of the forest. However, this would increase the likelihood of encountering flocks of flying beast. Although it didn't take him too much effort to kill these flying beasts, it was still quite troublesome to do so. Moreover, he didn't fly over the forest just so he could kill demonic beasts, but he did so to get out from the dense forest to get a clear sense of direction.

There were many encounters inside the forest as well. Group encounters were a common occurrence, but nothing at the sort of difficulty that he wouldn't be able to handle.

Qing Shui felt perplexed. He might need to spend a few more days inside the ancient forest before he could get out. He was strongly tempted to use his Nine Continent Boots to reach the other side, but that wouldn't assure his safety. In the end, he decided to find a way out slowly. It was the safest way, after all.

“Hmm, Jade Spirit Fruit?”

Suddenly, Qing Shui saw a tree of that was about ten meters in height somewhere far away. The thickness of the trunk was wide enough to be hugged by an adult. He was able to notice this tree

due to its relatively diminutive appearance amongst the neighboring gigantic trees. Even with its height of ten meters, the tree was still considered a miniature tree in this area.....

Hanging on the tree were hundreds of snow white fruits the size of fists. These fruits seemed familiar, and were similar to the Jade Spirit Fruit Qing Shui had known. However, he didn't really know what these fruits could do or how valuable they were.

Qing Shui's eyesight was exceptional, so aside from the small tree, he was able to spot a demonic beast just beside it. The beast seemed comparatively larger when it laid on the ground beside the 'fruit tree'.

Snow Lion King!

The moment Qing Shui saw the demonic beast, he immediately recognized it as the Snow Lion King. At first, he was shocked, because he had seen a Snow Lion Beast before. This lion was also known as the Snow Lion for short. He had met a Snow Lion in the Central Continent and it was the mount of the elderly man from the Medicine Emperor Clan in the Lingxi Country.

The Snow Lion of the elderly man from the Lingxi Country was less than 50 meters in size. But for its species, it was considered a large beast. However, the figure in front of him was twice as large as that Snow Lion. It seemed like a small mountain as it laid on the ground peacefully.

Qing Shui had a sudden thought and looked at the distance

between the Snow Lion King and himself. They were a hundred meters apart, but the attack of the Thunderous Beast could still hit the Snow Lion King from where Qing Shui stood. He immediately summoned the Thunderous Beast and commanded it to use Thunderbolt on the Snow Lion King relentlessly.

In any case, the Snow Lion King was still the ruler of this area. How could it allow such a disrespectful act to continue without trying to teach them a lesson? With a loud roar, the Snow Lion King got up and quickly rushed toward Qing Shui to retaliate.

The Snow Lion King had guarded this area for about 200 years, which was quite a feat for a demonic beast of its size. Once the fruit had ripened, the Snow Lion King would be able to feast on it and become a Saint Lion Beast.

Descending Heavens Talisman!

Fiery Golden Eyes!

Emperor's Qi!

Violet Lightning Strike!

Binding Talisman!

Art of Pursuing!

Qing Shui hit the Snow Lion King with his Big Dipper Sword, and his blows were followed by the endless assault of Thunderbolt from the Thunderous Beast. This perfect outcome from his simple strategy left Qing Shui in a state of shock.

The powerful Snow Lion King had become slower, as slow as a snail to be precise. It was barely breathing, since it had endured multiple hits from Thunderbolt and from Qing Shui's Big Dipper Sword. The beast could be considered as quite powerful, especially with its formidable defense, which was somewhat on par with that of the Heavenly Fire-Armored Rock Bear. Otherwise, it would have been long dead by now.

If Qing Shui were to continue to debuff the Snow Lion King's ability while having its weakness struck by Thunderous Beast continually, the lion would have breathed its last breath a few moments ago.

Qing Shui allowed the Thunderous Beast to stop when he saw the Snow Lion King on the verge of death. It would be a waste to kill such a majestic beast quickly, so he decided to capture and tame the beast for his own use. Normally, a demonic beasts with the title of 'King' in its name would hardly surrender itself to be tamed. They would rather die than submit themselves to the command of a mere human being. Because of their nature of a king, they need to prove themselves worthy of that title by being the best of their own species.

Qing Shui extended his arm toward the Snow Lion King to touch it. The beast widened its eyes, bearing an expression of alertness as it stared firmly at Qing Shui's hand. However, with its life force

draining away quickly, the lion could not move at all.

At that moment, Qing Shui could feel a strong resistance against his aura. Qing Shui sighed and took out a medicinal pill.

This medicinal pill could heal its wounds, but as he turned to look at the Snow Lion King, he could see a strong resistance in its eyes. A sheer force of determination lit from the lion's eyes, it refused to give in even if death were to knock on its doors.....

AST 882 – Jade Spirit Fruit, Stumbled Upon The Golden Jiao's Lair

When Qing Shui saw the determined gaze of the Snow Lion King, he knew that the lion was done for. He didn't try to force the beast to consume the medicinal pill – he would rather let the laws of nature determine the lion's fate.

To be frank, Qing Shui felt quite uncomfortable with his decision. It was quite a pity to let a majestic beast like this lion to perish away just like that. However, this was the way of a 'king', which was no different from the other demonic beasts in the wild. In any case, it was considered rare to be able to capture a demonic beast of the king class. Essentially, it would be impossible to do so, especially for demonic beasts with the strength greater than a Peak Martial Saint, as they had already possessed an intelligence from advanced cognitive functions.

Before he knew it, the Snow Lion King had slumped to the ground, its body becoming an empty shell, completely devoid of life. Qing Shui sighed deeply and then used his Primordial Flames to completely cremate the corpse.

He didn't salvage the core or the other materials from the Snow Lion King body, but instead buried its remains under the soil of the Jade Spirit Fruit Tree. The tree, however, was removed by Qing Shui and moved into the Realm of the Violet Jade Immortal.

He initially thought that the process would be a little bit difficult, since this being the first time he had attempted to move such a large ten meters tall tree. After a hefty process and a lot of effort,

he was able to move the tree successfully into the Realm of the Violet Jade Immortal.

The tree would be able to grow inside the realm without much trouble.

Qing Shui took a closer look at the Jade Spirit Fruit, which was coincidentally also known by the same name in his past life as well. This fruit could be consumed by both humans and demonic beasts and would effectively increase their Spiritual Qi once consumed. In other words, the fruit had the ability to change the constitution of the body fundamentally.

The effect, however, would differ between every human and demonic beast. Additionally, the fruit would require a period of time to ripe completely. Qing Shui could test the effect by then, which should be remarkable as the fruit was a product well-guarded by the Snow Lion King after all.

Killing the beast was his plan all along, but then he had a change of heart and decided to try and tame it at the last minute. Ultimately, he didn't succeed. If he couldn't tame the demonic beast, then it would be impossible to get along with it after that.

After this matter was settled, Qing Shui proceeded to venture into the deeper parts of the forest. This was the Snow Lion King's territory, so Qing Shui would have no problem in dealing with encounters with other demonic beasts of the same level.

.....

Finally, he made it out from the forest!

The bright sun in the sky was a cheerful sight, which subsequently lightened up his mood as well. The forest was always gloomy and dark and Qing Shui didn't like to be stuck in that atmosphere for a long period of time.

He had arrived at the depths of the mountain at last. The surroundings were enclosed with tall ancient trees and the atmosphere was peaceful but unrealistically quiet. Qing Shui was alarmed by this odd situation and felt that it was suspicious because there were no demonic beasts in sight.

Qing Shui was bewildered. He was told that the demonic beasts would be stronger the deeper he ventured but there was no sight of any beasts, not even a small demonic beast or a tiny flying beast.

This was a most alarming situation.

This location seemed like a wide beach. He scanned the area filled with golden sand, then he knelt down and grabbed a handful of sand before releasing his palm to let it trickle through his fingers.

As the sand slipped back to the ground, Qing Shui got up and continued his way forward. There must be a sea somewhere ahead!

This was a beach, after all. Oddly, he could feel a whiff of aura from the sand beneath his feet. This beach could be considered a

hotspot for demonic beast encounters as it was quite close to the ocean. However, he hadn't seen a single demonic beast since his arrival. The atmosphere was quiet, eerily quiet.

Qing Shui turned his head around to look out for surprise ambushes, then headed toward the area where the air felt increasingly moist. On the bright side, the colorful shells scattered around the beach painted a bit of vividness to the unsettling quietness of the beach, bringing a little bit of liveliness to the atmosphere.

After a brief stroll along the beach, a large flying beast hurriedly flew by, as if it was trying to run away from something. Qing Shui was calm, yet nervous. He couldn't understand why he felt that way just now.

Qing Shui seemed as if he was walking casually, but his pace was as fast as a flash of lightning. With one step on the sand, his body was brought forward by about ten li in an instant. His expression remained collected and composed as he expanded his spiritual sense to his surroundings.

And then, he froze.....

An overwhelming aura stormed abruptly toward his direction like a hurricane, enveloping everything in its path. Qing Shui halted his movements as he continued to observe the aura.

Roar!

A heaven-shattering roar trembled across the sky. At that moment, Qing Shui finally realized the true meaning of the word 'heaven-shattering' as he felt the ground and the sky vibrating from the growling screech. This was nothing like any of the cries he had heard before in his entire life.

One could even hear the roar very distinctively from thousands of li away.

Qing Shui's facial expression changed slightly. He stared at the faraway space attentively without taking cover, because he knew it would be futile as nothing could evade his opponent's spiritual sense.

As he recalled the flying beast from before, he finally realized why it had seemed terrified.

Roar!

Another roar echoed throughout the sky, which was promptly followed by a large figure soaring into the air. A gigantic golden python-like beast circled the sky swiftly.

Qing Shui's eyes followed the golden beast as he was still left in a state of shock. The flying creature in the sky was by far the largest demonic beast he had ever seen.

The circling motion was intriguing as well. Qing Shui had never seen a dragon before, but he had seen illustrations of one from

books and pictures in his past life. However, when he saw the golden beast in the sky, he was instantly reminded of the majestic figure of a dragon.

A dragon form!

The gigantic golden figure was about 200 meters in length with the body as strong as diamonds. Two humps were peeking through the ferocious head of the Jiao, as if it would eventually grow out horns from the top of its head.

The Golden Jiao!

Qing Shui finally realized that the flying beast was a Golden Jiao but he had no idea whether this beast could be the same Golden Jiao King that had destroyed the entire Cheng Clan. This Golden Jiao seemed to fit the bill, or rather, this could be the exact Golden Jiao King that was responsible for the annihilation of an entire clan.

He wasn't quite certain of the number of Golden Jiao dwelling in the Sky Penetrating Mountains but he guessed that there shouldn't be a lot of demonic beasts with such strength dwelling nearby or in other places around the mountain either. Moreover, if the Golden Jiao's habitat was in this region, he could conclude that this mighty beast must be the one responsible for the deaths of the entire Cheng Clan.

As the Golden Jiao soared in the air, its eyes zoomed toward the beach and locked its gaze onto Qing Shui, as if it had detected Qing

Shui's presence in its territory. The eyes that were akin to two enormous lanterns flashed brilliantly across Qing Shui as it turned its ferocious head in his direction.

In the Golden Jiao's eyes, Qing Shui seemed quite tiny, similar to a small ant on a wide field of sand. However, the beast was able to detect waves of energy from the tiny human and that he had trespassed into its lair.

What would Qing Shui think if he knew that he had stepped into the Golden Jiao's lair? If he knew that he had, Qing Shui would be able to realize why he hadn't been able to encounter any demonic beast when he arrived at this part of the forest.

The flying beast from before must have mistakenly flown into this area, which could explain why it had seemed so terrified as it fled in the opposite direction. Qing Shui was beginning to wonder if he was responsible for the awakening of the Golden Jiao, or whether it was the smaller flying beast's fault.

Demonic beasts of the Jiao species and the snake species have unique builds. The stronger ones could easily reach a size of more than a 100 meters due to their natural gifts. Other flying beasts, in contrary, would find it hard to reach more than a hundred meters as their growth limits were vastly lower than the jiao and snake species.

Qing Shui had a strange inclination that made him remember the woman from the crystal coffin when he faced the Golden Jiao in the sky. In any case, Qing Shui was no longer the same man he was during the time he met the woman in the crystal coffin.

Could the Golden Jiao have become stronger since the time it destroyed that clan?

Qing Shui couldn't get a good grasp on the Golden Jiao's overall strength, but he definitely knew that the enormous beast was undeniably powerful. In any case, the Golden Jiao wasn't an opponent he could easily defeat for now, even with his debuff abilities. Qing Shui also had a feeling that he wouldn't be able to pierce through the Golden Jiao's body just by looking at the lustrous diamond-like build of the enormous creature.

The disparity between their strengths was too great. Qing Shui had discarded the idea of battling the Golden Jiao. Escaping from the grasps of this terrifying beast was all he could think of right now.

Qing Shui quickly turned around and ran.

Roar!

The clamoring screech was evidently louder than the previous two roars. The enormous frame of the Golden Jiao hovered in the air as the beast blitzed toward Qing Shui at a lightning speed.

This terrifying speed was enough to push Qing Shui to consume a Gale Pellet immediately. After that, he quickly turned around and smacked a Descending Heavens Talisman onto the Golden Jiao!

Fiery Golden Eyes!

Emperor's Qi!

Roar Roar!

The Golden Jiao became furious from the debuffs and proceeded and its whole body began to gleam brightly with a golden light. Not only did its speed and power return to normal, the Golden Jiao's attributes had also become stronger than before.

Qing Shui was crying in pain on the inside. Nevertheless, he took out multiple poisonous 10,000 Years Coldsteel Needles and shot each of them toward the gigantic beast in succession. The needles were extremely fine and sharp, and within seconds, the needles had appeared in front of the Golden Jiao.

Clink!

A clear sound echoed in the air, followed the by a succession of similar echoes. By now, the needles were already broken into fragments. Met with the failure of his attacks, Qing Shui was even more determined to flee from the fight. The strength of this Golden Jiao was too perverted. Moreover, the hardness of its body was no joke.....

The Golden Jiao had an extraordinary ability to strengthen its power and spiritual capacity after being inflicted with Qing Shui's debuffs. This didn't necessarily mean that the debuffs were

completely dispelled, but the effects were fully compensated by its battle skills. If Qing Shui didn't apply some more weakening techniques onto the Golden Jiao, perhaps its power would be more formidable and terrifying.

Qing Shui was quite crafty in his escape, a special trait that came from the usage of his Ghostly Steps. He could also use the terrain to his advantage to aid in his escape with agility, wickedness, and shrewdness.

In the midst of his escape, Qing Shui had inevitably reached the border of the forest. He took no time to enter the dense forest and quickly moved around to maneuver away from the Golden Jiao.

The Golden Jiao, on the other hand, mercilessly razed through the forest, toppling and crushing the towering ancient trees instantly. At the same time, Qing Shui conjured two Primordial Flame Balls in his hands and aimed the flames toward the head of the great beast.

His Hidden Weapons had proven to be useless and ineffective against the hard surface of the Golden Jiao's body. Qing Shui felt that he could inflict some sort of damage against the Golden Jiao with the Primordial Flame Balls instead. And to his amazement, the Golden Jiao showed a moment of caution when the flame balls appeared to trail scorchingly toward its head.

Thus, Qing Shui decided to use the Primordial Flame Balls to stall for time and he also used the flames as a defense mechanism against the Golden Jiao. A series of furious roars echoed throughout the forest, followed by the trampling of the aging trees

and a scattered trail of wooden debris was left behind the Golden Jiao.

Qing Shui soared and glided behind a tree hidden in the mountain pass before entering the Realm of the Violet Jade Immortal without hesitation.

The Golden Jiao followed promptly and rammed the very tree Qing Shui had hidden behind, destroying everything in its path. However, Qing Shui was long gone before it had the chance to wound him. His aura had already disappeared when the Golden Jiao attempted to sense his presence in the surroundings.

Even after affirming the absence of Qing Shui's aura, the Golden Jiao continued to destroy the nearby trees relentlessly. Despite being a powerful and intelligent demonic beast, intellectual perception didn't seem to be one of its fortes.

Qing Shui was now safe inside his Realm of the Violet Jade Immortal. After a moment of cultivation, he decided to exit the realm to get a hold of the situation.

The Golden Jiao was thrashing about nearby like it was waiting for Qing Shui to re-appear. However, the intelligence of a demonic beast was distinctively lower than that of a human being. The Golden Jiao was a prime example – it didn't even notice the presence of Qing Shui's aura since it was blinded by the hatred in its heart. The conclusion drawn by the Golden Jiao was that Qing Shui had already fled far away from its territory.

After a few moments, the Golden Jiao trampled a row of trees once more before it turned around and left. Qing Shui observed the beast's movements quietly, making sure that the Golden Jiao had returned to its lair before continuing on his journey.

Qing Shui didn't want to waste his time allocated to the Realm of the Violet Jade Immortal carelessly. If he were to use up the entire six hours, he would have to depend on his Nine Continent Boots to escape from peril.

Of course, he could also choose to use the Nine Continent Steps instead to pass through the Sky Penetrating Mountains without going through countless winding paths unnecessarily.

Now that he knew about the Golden Jiao's lair, he decided to go around it for safety reasons. He took a long detour and stayed as far away from the territory infused with the Golden Jiao's Spiritual Qi as much as possible.

The detour began from the hundred li into the woods, and toward the south, then north. At the same time, he expanded his spiritual sense as he ventured around the Golden Jiao's territory to detect potential dangers from miles away.

After Qing Shui managed to detour around the Golden Jiao's territory, he finally let out a sigh of relief. This was the first time Qing Shui had battled with a demonic beast as strong as the Golden Jiao, which had ultimately forced him to flee in dismay.

AST 883 – Five-Headed Demonic Spider, Battle

Qing Shui wasn't sure if that Golden Jiao was a Martial Emperor level demonic beast. Even if it wasn't, he speculated that the strength of the Golden Jiao had to be somewhere close. In the presence of such formidable strength, Qing Shui wouldn't be able to survive if he didn't have the Realm of the Violet Jade Immortal as an outlet of escape.

If he sensed that something was amiss, Qing Shui would escape into the Realm of the Violet Jade Immortal without hesitation. He had taken half a day to detour around this area. Even though he wasn't as afraid as he thought would be, he was still nervous that he would accidentally encounter a demonic beast of such level again despite taking the effort to detour around its lair.

The Golden Jiao's lair was quite close and was less than 200,000 li from the forest. It wouldn't be strange if he were to bump into it in this 100,000 li area. This was because this area was near the border of its territory. Thinking about it now, its range of activity could be considered normal for a Golden Jiao of its size. If he had to blame something, it would be his own lousy luck.

After multiple encounters with demonic beasts that had superior strength, Qing Shui was beginning to realize how ill-prepared he was and how weak his powers were. At the same time, he was able to see the difference between those powerful beasts and himself, which was sufficient to motivate him to catch up to that level in order to defeat them.

There were no known Martial Emperors in the World of the Nine Continents, and Qing Shui certainly knew he wasn't worthy of becoming one yet. He hadn't reached the heights of his limit yet, so naturally he wouldn't be able to penetrate into the circle of those who were far superior to himself.

Martial Emperors were nothing uncommon in the Demon Gate and the Lion King's Ridges. These sects were essentially the spikes soldered into metal sheets – impenetrable and dominant. The woman in the crystal coffin could be a Martial Emperor as well, despite the obscurity of her cultivation realm. Moreover, she had been sleeping inside the crystal coffin for years. As for how long she had slumbered, he had no clue....

It had been three days since Qing Shui had left the Golden Jiao's lair, and he had not encountered any demonic beasts in his path yet. He knew that he was still within the Golden Jiao's territory, so it would be impossible to encounter another demonic beast that would dare to wander into this area foolishly.

Knowing this, Qing Shui mounted his Fire Bird and flew in the sky without fear. He sped through the air quickly with his next goal in mind – to go to the highest peak of the mountain to look for the Sky Penetrating Grass he desired. He estimated the distance from the lesser Sky Penetrating Grass and speculated that the Sky Penetrating Grass of more than 5,000 years should be somewhere on top of the highest peak.

Perhaps that was linked to the origins of the herb's name?

However, Qing Shui quickly dismissed his theory when he

recalled the appearance of the Sky Penetrating Grass. The herb may be small, but it was perfectly straight and magnificent as if it could pierce through the sky with its form. Moreover, there were also several white spots on top of the herb, much like the glittering specks formed by the silver stars in the night sky.

Perhaps this was the real reason why it was named as the ‘Sky Penetrating Grass’. In any case, Qing Shui still maintained the belief that the Sky Penetrating Grass he sought could be found growing in places of high altitude.

With that in mind, his place of interest should be at the peak of the lofty mountains. However, that was easier said than done, as there were countless mountains within a million li of the perimeter. He was perplexed at first, but as he recalled his inability to venture through the deeper parts of the forest due to his current strength, he decided that he would travel to the mountain peaks within 500,000 li, or maybe 400,000 li just to be safe.

Five days had passed without much trouble but then Qing Shui finally encountered another powerful demonic beast. However, this time, he had a strong urge to kill this demonic beast the moment it appeared in front of him.

Five-Headed Demonic Spider!

Of course, it wouldn’t be strange for a demonic beast this powerful to appear in this area – it was beyond question. Nevertheless, Qing Shui wanted to test his strength. He knew this beast wasn’t as formidable as the Golden Jiao earlier because he had prior knowledge about this spider from his earlier research on

demonic beasts in the World of the Nine Continents.

The strength of the Five-Headed Demonic Spider was measured by the number of heads on its body. Two heads signified the strength of Xiantian, three heads signified the strength of a Martial King, and four heads signified the strength of a Martial Saint.

Naturally, five heads would mean that it was around the level of a Martial Emperor. The information Qing Shui had received did not clarify this bit any further, but one thing was certain. The strength of the Five-Headed Demonic Spider would be at least halfway on the edge of the Martial Emperor realm.

However, demonic beasts of this kind had a deadly weakness, and that would be its extremely slow speed. Fire elemental attacks would also be twice as effective against this kind of demonic beast.

Nonetheless, the spider was a king of its species – a king level demonic beast. Qing Shui had expected the spider to be surrounded by a number of demonic beasts playing the role of the spider's minions. Even so, he thought hard about his plan and decided to try and tame it. If he failed to do so, he could always run away to safety, far from the grasp of the demonic beast.

Not only was the Five-Headed Demonic Spider afraid of fire, its movements were terribly slow. Moreover, the spider lacked range attacks and relied solely on melee combat to win fights. However, the spider had the ability to use its webs to attack in close range battles to a certain degree. It could also summon a horde of spiders to attack its foe. In addition, the spider's attacks were all poisonous, which could corrode its opponent's defense, inflicting

greater damage at the same time.

Similarly to the Blackjade Poisonous Spiderweb, the web of the Five-Headed Demonic Beast has a high corrosive ability and was able to corrode everything it ensnared within a few seconds, including metals of the 'false divine weapon' grade.

The silk also has an extremely high tenacity and was also highly cohesive in nature. Anything ensnared by the web would eventually deteriorate from the deadly constriction of the web. The corrosion would penetrate the skin and muscles and slowly move towards the inner organs. In conclusion, the poison of this spider's web was extremely vicious and should not be underestimated.

Once stuck to the web, the poison from the layers of web would seep into the opponent and consume everything. The limited speed of the Five-Headed Demonic Beast was a sort of blessing for its enemies, otherwise, the spider would be too deadly and terrifying. Even so, no one would dare to provoke the spider, lest they wished to die a painful and horrible death.

Moreover, although the speed of the Five-Headed Demonic Spider was comparatively slow, and it was significantly slower than demonic beasts of the same level, not all Martial Kings or Martial Saints would be much faster than it. This was despite the fact that the Five-Headed Demonic Spider was known to have a slow speed.

The Five-Headed Demonic Spider appeared to be as enormous as a mighty mountain. Its heads seemed quite ferocious, and one look

at its green slick eyeballs could send shivers down one's spine.

Its eight giant legs towered like stalks of movable pillars. Its lustrous legs glimmered with a brilliance like Coldsteel. The body of the Five-Headed Demonic Spider was entirely silver gray in color and its outer shell spider was as solid as an armor. When the spider spotted Qing Shui within its territory, it let out a horrible cry that could pierce the eardrums of those who heard it.

This was Qing Shui's first time hearing the cries of a spider. He didn't think it would be this horrible to his ears.....

Nevertheless, it was time to attack!

Since he had made up his mind, Qing Shui placed the Thunderous Beast and himself at the limit of their attack range, and without further ado, he commanded the Thunderous Beast to release its Thunderbolt attack.

Thunderbolt!

Speed wasn't the Five-Headed Demonic Spider's forte, so naturally the damage from the Thunderbolt was deadly. Not only was it deadly, Thunderbolt could also decrease the spider's speed progressively each time it was struck by the attack.

The piercing cry rang out once again, but this time, numerous spiders appeared from afar. However, these spiders were significantly smaller than the Five-Headed Demonic Spider, most

of them had two heads, three heads, or even four heads on their bodies. Surprisingly, the majority of these spiders were at the level of a Martial Saint.

The Sky Penetrating Mountains was indeed a place of wonder and complications. From what Qing Shui could see, there were hundreds of demonic spiders crawling toward his direction. Seeing a field of gigantic ‘spiders’ made Qing Shui shudder in disgust and horror.

He spared no time and called out his Fire Bird as he knew that all spiders were vulnerable to fire. It would be a walk in the park for the Fire Bird to kill all these weaker spiders within seconds due to the bird’s formidable prowess.

Meanwhile, the Thunderous Beast continued to blast the Five-Headed Demonic Spider with its Thunderbolt attack again while maintaining a distance. Qing Shui, the Thunderous Beast, and the Fire Bird retreated slowly as they continued their assault against the horde of spiders.

Descending Heaven Talisman!

Fiery Golden Eyes!

Emperor’s Qi!

In an instant, the Five-Headed Demonic Spider had slowed down greatly. Even though the spider’s original speed could not be

considered that slow compared to the Thunderous Beast, the Thunderous Beast was now able to match it with its current speed since it had debuffed the spider with the Thunderbolt attack.

Qing Shui was able to keep up the pace since he had consumed a Gale Pellet earlier. Despite the Fire Bird being faster than the Thunderous Beast, it would not be able to match against the speed of the Five-Headed Demonic Spider without the debuffs either.

In any case, Qing Shui was aiming to match the Five-Headed Demonic Spider's speed for at least a brief moment so that he could retreat slowly as he continued his assault. If he could succeed in his attempt, then victory would be assured. As long as he could maintain the balance for a period of time, then his strategy would definitely work.

Violet Lightning Strike!

Qing Shui took the opportunity to strike with his Primordial Flame Balls and aimed the poisonous 10,000 Years Coldsteel Beads towards four different heads of the Five-Headed Demonic Spider. At the same time, Qing Shui followed up his attack with a Binding Talisman as well.

Undoubtedly, the Thunderous Beast was a powerful demonic beast. The Violet Lightning Strike was only able to paralyze the spider with absolute certainty for a short period of time. However, this small window of time was enough for Qing Shui's attack to hit the spider with accuracy.

Pu Pu.....

Qing Shui's 'Primordial Flame Balls' and the poisonous 10,000 Years Frosted Iron Balls punctured the spider's heads through its gigantic eyes with a formidable force.

The piercing cry was a literal shrill that could burst one's eardrums. What came next was a shocking revelation to Qing Shui as he saw the four severely wounded heads rolling down from the spider's body. He felt cold shivers all over his body when he heard the awful cry of the spider that sounded quite similar to the wails of a banshee.

The Thunderous Beast had also infused its accumulated power into its attack as the Thunderbolt continued to strike the Five-Headed Demonic Spider.

At the same time, Qing Shui's Fire Bird continued its assault the incoming horde of spiders with its flames.

Additionally, the Fire Bird and the Thunderous Beast had both been fed a Gale Pellet by Qing Shui to increase their attack speed.

It was at this time that Qing Shui found the right opportunity to bring out his Soulshake Bell.

Without hesitation, Qing Shui immediately used his Soulshake Bell against the Five-Headed Demonic Beast. Based on his memory of the historical records, the Five-Headed Demonic Beast was said to

possess a special kind of spiritual energy. With five heads intact, each of its heads would contain a certain amount of spiritual energy that could be used to secure its status as a formidable leader within its circle.

Naturally, the spider had become extremely furious after realizing it had lost four heads to Qing Shui's hands. If it wanted to cultivate its heads back to its former condition, it would require more than an extensive 4,000 years to do so.

Not only was the Five-Headed Demonic Spider overwhelmed with rage, it was instilled with a profound sensation of fear as well. The spider was becoming slower, as if it had stepped into a pool of quicksand, pulling back its legs as it struggled to crawl towards Qing Shui. The Thunderous Beast, on the other hand, continued to release multiple Thunderbolt attacks from a safe distance.

Qing Shui's lips curved into a smile – he knew he had found the right approach. This demonic beast was quite unfortunate to have Qing Shui as its opponent, as he could be considered a kryptonite to its powers. Four heads were already down before it could release 10% of its ability.

The Golden Jiao and the Five-Headed Demonic Spider were much stronger than the Snow Lion King. The lion wasn't even in the same cultivation realm as the two demonic beasts to begin with.

The Five-Headed Demonic Beast was still screeching in pain. Suddenly, the spider turned to Qing Shui and shot itself toward in his direction with a speed a few times faster than before. At the

same time, the air around the spider became distorted due to the momentum of its speed.

In that moment, the spider also spat out a sticky mass that turned out to be a huge spider web, which spread out like an uncovered tarp that attempted to ensnare Qing Shui. He could even smell a disgusting odor that felt nauseating from the spider web coming from miles away.

Qing Shui couldn't risk touching the web but it was already too late to enter the Realm of the Violet Jade Immortal. Despite having half a breath of time, it still wasn't enough to evade from the impending danger.

At that precise moment, Qing Shui took out the Primordial Demon Refining Furnace without hesitation and enlarged it in an instant, dropping it in between himself and the Five-Headed Demonic Spider like a small mountain in the middle of its path.

Dong!

A dull sound echoed in the surrounding, and the Five-Headed Demonic Spider was subsequently blocked from advancing further, gaining some extra time for Qing Shui. He looked at the spider web heading towards him and his Thunderous Beast. In the next moment, he held up his hand and swiftly shot a Primordial Flame.

The Fire Bird soaring in the sky followed up this attack and shot multiple Hell's Inferno fireballs towards the spider web continuously.

The spider web was vulnerable to fire despite its robust quality. The damage inflicted by the Fire Bird's flame attack was super effective. However, the web would not suffer any damages from ordinary fires and flames.

Luckily, Qing Shui's Primordial Flames were powerful enough to inflict damage on the spider web. He took precautions and prepared his Violet Gold Divine Shield to stall for time for him to enter the Realm of the Violet Jade Immortal, just in case he wouldn't be able to withstand the force of the web.

In the end, everything was fine. Qing Shui turned to the Primordial Demon Refining Furnace that had sent the Five-Headed Demonic Spider into a state of fear and took back his full control. The spider was instilled with fear and was left with one head intact on its body.....

The gigantic Five-Headed Demonic Spider with its body akin to Coldsteel finally slumped to the ground in front of the Primordial Demon Refining Furnace without moving an inch. The beast was visibly shaken as it was overwhelmed with extreme fear.

Suddenly, Qing Shui had an idea!

"Can I tame it?" Qing Shui looked at the gigantic spider with disbelief. The beast was certainly ferocious, but its cry was displeasing to his ears. The eyes of the beast were unpleasant to look at as well.....

AST 884 – Taming A Five-Headed Demonic Spider

The demonic spider seemed to have lost its battle with the moment the Primordial Demon Refining Furnace appeared within its vicinity. This kind of situation had happened before, and the affected beast would be weakened greatly in terms of its power and it would be inflicted with intense fright as well. If the beast was used for demon refining, it would rather fight to its death than subject to itself to the immolation to the demon refining. Of course, it would not retaliate as long as Qing Shui wasn't planning on using it for demon refining.

The Five-Headed Demonic Beast fixed its gleaming green eyes on the Primordial Demon Refining Furnace with uneasiness. The beast remained still, and somewhat ignored Qing Shui who was standing on the side. He didn't mind one bit and continued to assess the situation between the beast and the furnace.

Capturing the demonic beast was initially difficult, as the spider possessed a strength that may prove to be too powerful for Qing Shui to handle. However, the spider's powers were already debuffed, and he also had the Primordial Demon Refining Furnace to assist him in the acquisition process. Hopefully, Qing Shui thought, the capturing process would go much smoother without any sudden problems.

If he could capture a demonic beast like this, he would be able to cultivate it and make it stronger with the aid of his medicinal pills. Moreover, he had a feeling that he could use those 'pellets' to restore the severed heads and this could also allow the spider to

gain an exponential increase in its ability.

The spider already possessed an impeccable strength, which almost felt like the strength verging into the realm of the Martial Emperor. Maybe if he tried it this time.....

A sense of excitement overwhelmed Qing Shui's heart as he glanced at the half-crippled Five-Headed Demonic Spider. Both the Diamond Gigantic Elephant and Fire Bird still had a long way to go to achieve their next growth and Qing Shui was already content with the Thunderous Beast as a semi-automatic battle beast with the capability to act accordingly. He had rarely used the Jade Emperor Queen Bee and the Gold-Silver Colored Butterflies in his battles, and the horde of Jade Emperor Bees had been assigned to harvest the Queen Bee Nectar instead.

Even though the Five-Headed Demonic Spider wasn't a ranged attacker, the beast had the potential to become even greater and more powerful than its current form. For the time being, Qing Shui deemed the Five-Headed Demonic Spider potentially useful for his subsequent battles. With such potential, this beast could even achieve multiple breakthroughs to become an extremely superior battle beast in its destined future.

Qing Shui's spiritual energy enveloped the Five-Headed Demonic Spider carefully and gently.

The spiritual energy then promptly entered into the spider's mind. It was more convenient and easier for Qing Shui as the beast only had one head remaining on its body. If he had to tame this demonic beast while it had multiple heads, he might encounter

extreme difficulties in his endeavor – essentially, it would be impossible.

At the same time, Qing Shui repeatedly hit the surface of the Primordial Demon Refining Furnace as the energy from his body transferred into it in a consistent flow. The gleaming light surrounding the ancient air of the furnace glowed brighter, followed by a series of faint beast callings echoing in the air. The spiritual callings felt magnificent and shuddering, which was sufficient to frighten this demonic beast with absolute certainty.

Qing Shui's spiritual energy continuously disrupted the spider's spiritual energy as he tried to make the spider recognize his superior power and authority. With the furnace's terrifying ability, the Five-Headed Demonic Spider had no choice but to concede to its fear as it shivered in uneasiness.

Just then, Qing Shui took out a pellet that was refined from the core of the deity statue. He had made up his mind – if he could capture this demonic beast, then essentially he had nothing to worry about within the 30,000 li depth of Sky Penetrating Mountains. After all, the Five-Headed Demonic Spider could be considered a powerful demonic beast with a territorial dominance characteristic.

Qing Shui took the Crimson Pellet and placed it in front of the Five-Headed Demonic Beast. He continued to infuse his Qi into the Primordial Demon Refining Furnace while targeting the Five-Headed Demonic Spider with his spiritual energy to distract the beast from resisting the temptations of the Crimson Pellet.

Demonic beasts and humans were made different. No matter how strong a demonic beast was, its intellectual capability could never be compared to that of a human being. Once the demonic beast had validated one person, it would not change its mind. The stronger the demonic beast was, the more loyal it would become. This was also the case for the Five-Headed Demonic Spider. If it were to accept Qing Shui's 'pellet' willingly, then it would swear loyalty to him for eternity.

The possibility of the Five-Headed Demonic Spider being a demonic beast king was of no concern to Qing Shui any longer. A demonic beast king could only be captured by experienced beast tamers or those with unique bloodlines, albeit with the same low capture rate. Qing Shui admitted his excellence over beast tamers, but as for the cultivators with a unique bloodline, he had only heard rumors about them and never had the chance to acquaint himself with one.

Time was ticking away and Qing Shui began to feel nervous. When he caught the Ten Thousand Poisonous Violet Sable back then, he had used a Flower of Life to tame it. Now that he had encountered the Five-Headed Demonic Spider in this area, he decided to capture it first before he began his journey to find the Sky Penetrating Grass at the peak of the mountain.

The Gold-Silver Colored Butterflies though, were an unexpected case. They were easily captured after they had succumbed to the presence of the Jade Emperor Queen Bee.

Qing Shui didn't know if the Five-Headed Demonic Spider had other weaknesses but he was certain that the spider was half a step

into the Martial Emperor realm – its breakthrough was near.

However, the demonic spider could easily lose its life whilst pursuing the breakthrough to Martial Emperor if it was not careful. Demonic beasts have a stronger desire for power compared to most human beings. In their world, the laws of the jungle were everything – the strong would always rule over the weak.

Qing laughed as he saw the Five-Headed Demonic Spider struggling to escape from the temptations of the Crimson Pellet. The spider was tempted by its desire, but couldn't bring itself to fall into Qing Shui's trap. This was his plan all along – it was crucial for the demonic beast to recognize its owner for the taming process to be complete. Most demonic beasts would not recognize a weak person as their owner. In the spider's perspective, Qing Shui could be considered strong since he was able to sever four of its heads at once, much to its contempt.

Demonic beasts have simple thoughts, any form of assault – sneak attack or by poisonous means – were essentially the same to them. In a way, that might have contributed to the spider's hesitation toward the pellet. Of course, Qing Shui's Primordial Demon Refining Furnace definitely had a huge effect on this spider, but the most lethally enticing factor right now would be the Crimson Pellet in front of its eyes.

Qing Shui currently had an 80% chance of capturing the spider. With a boost of confidence, he took out eight more Crimson Pellets and swayed them in front of the demonic beast. He did so to tempt the spider into submission as the Crimson Pellets could only be consumed twice at most. Anything more would be useless and

ineffective.

After the time it took for an incense to burn had passed, the Five-Headed Demonic Spider finally opened its enormous mouth.

With a smile curved on his face, Qing Shui was quite ecstatic as he took a Crimson Pellet and hurled it into the Five-Headed Demonic Spider's mouth.

It was a success!

This spider was truly a demonic beast at the Peak Martial Saint level. Even so, he believed that the beast could potentially become a Martial Emperor of the lowest level in due time. Even though Qing Shui didn't have a good understanding of the Martial Emperor grade, he had a feeling that the Golden Jiao and the woman in the crystal coffin were both Martial Emperors of the lowest level as well.

Qing Shui thought that it would be best for the Five-Headed Demonic Spider to quickly advance into the Martial Emperor Realm since it had already become his own demonic beast after all.

The spider gave a loud piercing screech, as if it was telling Qing Shui that it had become significantly stronger.

Qing Shui approached the spider with his physical senses suppressed and his spiritual sense expanded. The energy capacity of the Five-Headed Demonic Spider kept increasing at an

accelerated rate, flowing violently between its veins to refine every part of its body.

Suddenly, one of the severed parts of the spider began to form an obscure flesh surrounded by blood, until the figure finally began to form into a ferocious head. The head seemed slightly different, with the color of the head becoming as white as the moon. Qing Shui discovered that the spider had forced out a fresh new head with the use of its energy despite it being painful to do so. The spider wouldn't have become this miserable had Qing Shui not sliced off its heads in the first place.

The third pellet!

Fourth pellet!

And the fifth pellet!

The pellets had allowed the Five-Headed Demonic Spider to not only recover its powers fully, but to allow the spider to grow stronger in the process. The growth of the spider had essentially confirmed his suspicion, that the core used for the concoction of the Crimson Pellet was indeed from a powerful Divine Beast.

Qing Shui couldn't care less whether the core was from a Divine Beast or not. As long as the Crimson Pellet could benefit him in a long run, then it was enough. Qing Shui was elated as he looked at his demonic beast proudly. He had finally succeeded in taming the Five-Headed Demonic Spider on his own.

The energy capacity of the Five-Headed Demonic Spider had slowly returned to normal. As the beast cocked its head toward Qing Shui again, he took out another Crimson Pellet and fed it to the spider.

The Five-Headed Demonic Spider remained still as it slumped onto the ground as Qing Shui looked on silently and patiently. He could feel a large portion of the energy within the spider fluctuating rapidly and increasingly forceful.

Screech!

Qing Shui was almost deafened by the piercing cry of the spider!

Suddenly, Qing Shui opened his eyes and retreated immediately, while at the same time, the Five-Headed Demonic Spider exuded a faint layer of light akin to the glow of the pale white moon.

AST 885 – Early Martial Emperor Five-Headed Demonic Spider, Qing Shui

Multiplying His Earnings

The huge body of the Five-Headed Demonic Spider had not grown larger. In fact, it seemed to have shrunk slightly. Nonetheless, it gave off a feeling that it had become more ‘tempered’ and its shriek became even louder.

The silverish-grey glow from the Five-Headed Demonic Spider grew brighter and brighter. Its huge body trembled continuously. It started to shed its shell, which was as hard as steel. It was growing a new layer.

Rebirth?

Qing Shui felt that his wish might be fulfilled soon. If the Five-Headed Demonic Spider could break through to Martial Emperor, even if it was the weakest of Martial Emperors, it would be sufficient.

The silverish-grey glow grew brighter and brighter and the Five-Headed Demonic Spider’s aura grew stronger and stronger. Qing Shui stood in the distance and watched, waiting for the Five-Headed Demonic Spider to evolve.

The time it took for one incense stick to burn passed. Suddenly, the body of the Five-Headed Demonic Spider seemed to have exploded. The silverish-grey glow became extremely resplendent.

The Five-Headed Demonic Spider released an intense aura and was wrapped up in that glow.

This time, it did not take long. Soon, the glow rescinded. Qing Shui stared blankly at the Five-Headed Demonic Spider in front of him. It was a pure silverish-grey and it looked very beautiful. Its body had a metallic look to it. However, it seemed to be half as large as before....

However, its abilities had undoubtedly grown a lot stronger and its thick aura was incomparably intense.....

Qing Shui felt that the current Five-Headed Demonic Spider should be comparable to that Golden Dragon. The eyes on the five huge heads turned silvery-grey. It looked a lot more natural on it.

When it saw Qing Shui, it actually made 'chichi' sound and ran over. Then it ran circles around Qing Shui. Maybe because it had become his demonic beast but Qing Shui could feel that it had a strange connection with him.

He could even feel a sort of dependence that the Five-Headed Demonic Spider had towards him. It was an indescribable feeling. It was as though the Five-Headed Demonic Spider was a small child.....

This feeling made Qing Shui feel like laughing. It was an indescribable feeling. He stretched his hands out to touch this huge fellow, trying to sense its abilities. He was actually unable to tell.....

However, now that it had become his demonic beast, Qing Shui was able to use his Heavenly Vision Technique to look at the Five-Headed Demonic Spider. He wanted to see what strong techniques it had, so that he would be able to utilize it better in the future.

Mutated Five-Headed Demonic Spider!

This was the first thing Qing Shui saw. He felt amazed for awhile before he became happy. The probability of demonic beasts mutating was very low. When it happened, it was normally a good thing. It would gain some special abilities or techniques, allowing its abilities to become stronger.

Thinking of the size of the Five-Headed Demonic Spider, Qing Shui felt that it should be a result of the mutation. He then went to take a look at the techniques of the Five-Headed Demonic Spider.

Five Qi Origin: The Five-Headed Demonic Spider's innate technique. Permanently raises the body's abilities by five times. Does not consume any energy.

Qing Shui was stunned. He originally felt that having the Fire Bird and himself was enough. Only now did he realize that the gap between a peak Martial Saint and an early Martial Emperor was so wide. He was sure that the abilities of the Five-Headed Demonic Spider were definitely at the level of a Martial Emperor. It might even be a high early Martial Emperor.

Corrosive Poison Web: The Five-Headed Demonic Spider attacks

with an inescapable web. The web has a cohesive and corrosive property. The resilient spider silk is difficult to cut even with a blade.

Poison Silk Entanglement: The Five-Headed Demonic Spider can fire a thread of poison silk. This attack has a range of 500 meters and entangles the target. Its speed is very fast and it is highly toxic and cohesive.

Spider Swarm Attack: The unique ability of a king of demonic beasts. Its strong subjects are able to attack together with it.

Flying Spider Silk: After using this ability, its speed will increase by five times. This ability lasts for seven and a half minutes. It can be used once a day.

Sharpness: The Five-Headed Demonic Spider's eight legs are incredibly sharp. They carry a high toxicity and penetrating ability.

Unyielding Shield: The Five-Headed Demonic Spider's defense is extremely strong.

Qing Shui quickly looked through the techniques in one breath. This Five-Headed Demonic Spider did not have many battle techniques, nor did it have an explosive ability like the Mighty Elephant Stomp or Mighty Elephant's Recklessness.

Although this Five-Headed Demonic Spider did not have that

kind of explosive battle techniques, nor did it have a technique like the Fire Bird's Hell's Inferno, it was good at sneak attacks and crowd control. It could suddenly increase its speed and use the Corrosive Poison Web or Poison Silk Entanglement. Qing Shui was thinking that he could combine the Thunderous Beast's Violet Lightning Strike with the Corrosive Poison Web or Poison Silk Entanglement...

The Flying Spider Silk was a skill that it had obtained after it mutated. The Corrosive Poison Web and Poison Silk Entanglement should have been strengthened as well. He was now satisfied. He had never expected that after mutating, it would warm up to him so much. He initially thought that this early Martial Emperor beast would not be as close to him as his other demonic beasts. However, things turned out different to what he had expected.

Qing Shui attempted to communicate with it but after he heard its voice, he became stunned...

That old turtle that guarded the water crystal palace back then had an aged voice. It was a voice that was transmitted through his consciousness. However, the voice he heard from the Five-Headed Demonic Spider now was that of a four or five year old girl.....

Was it because that old turtle was a very strong Martial Emperor or was it because it was very old.....? As for this Five-Headed Demonic Spider, it was only in its early stages.....

This was only Qing Shui's guess. He supposed that the ability to communicate via the consciousness was a standard of determining if a demonic beast was a Martial Emperor. Only by becoming a

Martial Emperor could a demonic beast communicate with its master via an illusionary voice.

His Five-Headed Demonic Spider was now a Martial Emperor leveled demonic beast. His wish had finally been fulfilled. Qing Shui was feeling very happy now. As he put away the Primordial Demon Refining Furnace, he communicated with the Five-Headed Demonic Spider.

The results caused Qing Shui to become very astonished. When the Five-Headed Demonic Spider broke through to Martial Emperor, everything it sensed and saw was new to it. It could be said that the Five-Headed Demonic Spider was now a clean slate but it was roughly aware of its master and some situations.

This lead Qing Shui to be incomparably happy. To think that this would happen. It looked like that when demonic beasts broke through to Martial Emperor, it was similar to a rebirth. To Qing Shui, this was a good thing. When this happened to a tamed demonic beast, it would not forget its master. Just like Qing Shui's demonic beast, the brand on their souls would not vanish. Furthermore, after they broke through, they would remain by the side of their tamer. It would not become a masterless demonic beast after being reborn.

This was Qing Shui's guess. Qing Shui had read some records on Beast Tamers in history books. These records said that the tamed demonic beast would not betray its master when it broke through. Only when the beast was mistreated to a certain extent would it have thoughts of betrayal. There were very few people who would mistreat their demonic beast. Aside from some perverted people,

no one would choose to do that. For tamers, their demonic beasts were akin to their children.

After experience rebirth, the Five-Headed Demonic Spider was now very different from before. After taking this step, it was like it had ascended to the heavens. Qing Shui really wanted to know about the level of its abilities. So he asked the Five-Headed Demonic Spider about its abilities. The answer he got caused Qing Shui to be very astonished.

Under its peak state, its abilities would nearly reach 400 stars...

This was a difference of a hundred stars compared to before. After all, previously it was already half a step into the Martial Emperor realm. Now, the level of its abilities directly jumped to 400 stars.....

After all, just the Five Qi Origin could increase its body's ability level by five times. The body of demonic beasts were naturally strong and they had innate battle techniques. Humans, on the other hand, had other supplementary techniques.

The earlier increase of 100 stars was actually just an increase of 20 stars. After he weakened it, it should still have about 50 stars of abilities. Although it was strong, its speed was truly lacking.

This was the reason why Qing Shui was happy. It looked like he had gained a lot. With this breakthrough, its strength had multiplied, how terrifying.

The starting point of demonic beasts was very high and was unlike humans, who could multiply their level of abilities by ten with every breakthrough. Humans had weapons and their other supplementary techniques. They had to use their brains but demonic beasts could rely on their bodies. This was how it had been since time immemorial.

Seeing the abilities of the Five-Headed Demonic Spider caused Qing Shui to be very excited. This could also be considered as a huge increase in his strength. Although he had not become a Martial Emperor, he now had a Martial Emperor leveled demonic beast.....

He had not come to the Sky Penetrating Mountains for nothing. The Primordial Demon Refining Furnace was very strong, which made his trip to the Southern Viewing Continent very worth it. The Thunderous Beast had also made significant contributions.....

Not long after this, a large group of demonic spiders came. These were the subjects of the Five-Headed Demonic Spider. There were about 500 of them. Qing Shui informed the Five-Headed Demonic Spider of the rules of the Realm of the Violet Jade Immortal. The Realm of the Violet Jade Immortal was now very big, it would have no problem accommodating all these spiders. He was just worried that the spiders might wreck the things in there.

Thus, Qing Shui communicated with the Five-Headed Demonic Spider. After obtaining its guarantee, he sent all the spiders inside his realm. The things that they could eat were the black fishes, turtles, and prawns. Qing Shui even made another huge pond and placed some black fishes, turtles, and prawns in it for them. With

their speed of proliferation, food for them would not be a problem.

The Jade Spirit Fruit Tree that he placed in there not long ago was somewhat close. He also placed in the jade stones he obtained from the Ten Thousand Turtle Swamp along with some rare herbs.

Qing Shui brought all of the spiders in together.

After observing them for awhile, there did not seem to be any problems. The Five-Headed Demonic Spider now had a greater ability to make the other spiders submit to it. Out of the 500 spiders, there were 30 Four-Headed Demonic Spiders. These were Martial Saint leveled demonic beasts. A few of them even had ten stars of abilities.

Qing Shui truly felt this was a great gain now. He felt that he would not have any problem within 300,000 li of Sky Penetrating Mountains. Even if he pushed further by 200,000 li, there would still be no problems. He could finally focus on looking for the Sky Penetrating Grass.

When he communicated with the Five-Headed Demonic Spider, Qing Shui found out that its old nest was nearby. There seemed to be some things in there. The Five-Headed Demonic Spider then took the lead and brought Qing Shui back to the old nest. The five hundred spiders stayed in the Realm of the Violet Jade Immortal, absorbing the Spiritual Qi and cultivating.

The old nest was only about 100 li away. To them, it was just a moment of traveling. After breaking through to Martial Emperor,

Qing Shui found that the Five-Headed Demonic Spider was now very fast.

At the very least, Qing Shui would not be any faster than it even if he tried his best. Its speed was not inferior to that of Golden Jiao. Qing Shui felt that this new-found speed was an additional ability granted by the mutation.

AST 886 – Formidable Techniques, Musings

People feel energetic when they have something to celebrate about. This was exactly how Qing Shui felt at the moment, not tired at all. On the contrary, he felt so energetic that he felt like going back to kill the Golden Jiao or even try to tame it...

Yet, this was just wishful thinking. Humans had to learn to be content with what they had. Taming a demonic beast required the backing of a large amount of spirit energy. This was the reason why Beast Tamers didn't possess that many demonic beasts but tried their best to choose suitable ones. Otherwise, if one was able to tame an army of demonic beasts, wouldn't he be undefeatable? As everyone had a limited amount of spirit energy, even the greatest Beast Tamers could only own a limited number of demonic beasts.

Qing Shui was already content now. He could sense that he had already reached the maximum number of demonic beasts he could control with his current spirit energy. The connection between a beast tamer and his demonic beast was based on telepathy that required a large amount of spirit energy. This was why Qing Shui had only tamed the Five-Headed Demonic Spider after he had become more powerful. Otherwise, he could have only used it to refine demons.

This was also the reason why Qing Shui had never stopped training his spirit energy. He had been imprisoned by the woman in the crystal coffin precisely because his spirit energy was too weak, but he had reaped a huge benefit from that.

Without that woman, his Realm of the Violet Jade Immortal wouldn't have reached the seventh level and his spirit energy would not be this powerful. He would've never gotten some of the medicinal herbs in his possession or thought about going to Eastern Victory Divine Continent. The source of his strength today could, in some sense, be boiled down to that woman.

Unfortunately, Qing Shui did not know what to think of her...

His primary goal of going to the Sky Penetrating Mountains was to search for the Sky Penetrating Grass. Everything else was secondary. As long as his strength kept rising, he held an open-mind towards the situations that presented themselves.

He reached the dwelling of the Five-Headed Demonic Spider very quickly, but the cave was actually huge. Qing Shui followed the Five-Headed Demonic Spider into the cave and as they went deeper, the surroundings got darker.

On the bright side, things like gold, jadeite and other precious stones dazzled brightly precisely because it was dark. Qing Shui did not expect to find these things here in the spider cave, especially not treasures like these. This gave him a rather strange feeling.

There were in fact some unique people in the Central Continent who required gold and precious gems for their cultivation because these things possessed a sort of Spiritual Qi. Oddly, the Five-Headed Demonic Spider did not belong to this category. When Qing Shui asked it about the shining precious objects, it seemed unable to give him a straight answer.

Anyways, he had a lot of space in the Realm of the Violet Jade Immortal. No one would ever complain that he had too much money, so Qing Shui logically stored all of these things into his realm. The items included demonic beast crystals that could be used for forging equipment, alchemy and demon refining. Even though they were inferior relative to the core of a demonic beast, they were still very valuable, especially if they originally belonged to a powerful demonic beast.

The amount of items couldn't be considered too much or little. There were many demonic beast cores, perhaps the leftovers of the demonic spider's meals, but there wasn't anything in particular that piqued Qing Shui's interest. His Five-Headed Demonic Spider did not have a fearsome level of strength before its breakthrough and he doubted that just one demonic beast could keep anything special. With this in mind, he didn't feel any disappointment.

Since he was already in the location and it was getting late, Qing Shui decided to explore the place. He could rest for a day before searching for the Sky Penetrating Grass again. With his Five-Headed Demonic Spider, he could save a lot of time.

Demonic beasts have a very strong sense of smell and very keen senses in general. With his Five-Headed Demonic Spider, no other demonic beasts dared to approach.

Since he didn't have much to do Qing Shui decided to investigate his Five-Headed Demonic Spider's stats.

First up was its speed. Qing Shui wanted to see how he matched up. He consumed a Gale Pellet and an Agility-Enhancing Fruit, but he was still unable to match the Five-Headed Demonic Spider's speed. It was on a whole different level...

Now, Qing Shui could clearly see the difference between a Peak Martial Saint and a Martial Emperor. Next, he had the Five-Headed Demonic Spider enter its Flying Spider Silk mode, which could increase its speed by five times. He wanted to see what sort of speed that would be.

Qing Shui had cold feet once he saw it. It could definitely kill him in seconds if it wanted to...

There was a large unbridgeable gap between the realms of Martial Saint and Martial Emperor. Everything was laughable when compared to absolute strength, because one would not even have the time to react.

Before its breakthrough, Qing Shui had already witnessed the terrifying prowess of its Corrosive Poison Web. There was now even a green glowing aura on the web. Despite its incredible increase in strength after it reached the Martial Emperor level, Qing Shui guessed that the faint green aura must be the result of consuming the Crimson Pellet.

When the web fell, Qing Shui tried to use his Primordial Flame Ball to burn it, but this time round, he found out that it took a really long time for his Primordial Flames to burn through the web...

Qing Shui was both happy and a little dispirited at the same time. Yet, he thought about how it was just natural that a Martial Emperor demonic beast should have such talents. Otherwise, it would be unable to compete with other beasts of the same level. If he could simply burn and destroy the spider's web, he wouldn't have struggled dealing with the Golden Jiao.

Anyway, his Primordial Flame Ball had always been like that. It was already very powerful, especially after he had reached the large success stage for his Heart of Roc. All in all, since the Five-Headed Demonic Spider was his, if its Corrosive Poison Web was powerful, it would still be beneficial to him.

He knew he would become stronger once he reached the next breakthrough. For now, he would have to depend on his Five-Headed Demonic Spider. He would treat it as his closest combat companion and bring it wherever he went— just like how beast tamers treated their demonic beasts like their children.

Without him noticing, nightfall came. Qing Shui and his Five-Headed Demonic Spider returned to the mountain cave and he pitched a tent. When it was the right time, Qing Shui brought his Five-Headed Demonic Spider into the Realm of the Violet Jade Immortal.

The Realm of the Violet Jade Immortal was rather crowded now. There were around 500 spiders and 1000 Jade Emperor Queen Bees...

Qing Shui walked around his Realm of the Violet Jade Immortal, observing. Even though there was a large area of untended terrain after his Realm of the Violet Jade Immortal had leveled up, he managed to create a boundary for his herb garden.

The Jade Spirit Fruit Tree was thriving in the Realm of the Violet Jade Immortal. The tree was considerably hardy and hadn't been affected too much when he had retained only its main "spiritual" roots and transplanted it in the realm.

Qing Shui walked over to where his Magnificent Mountains and Rivers Screen was standing and sat down on his Hu Wei Imperial Tutor Chair, facing the eight hanged Portraits of Beauty. Qing Shui looked at each of them sequentially.

The first portrait was Di Chen. He suddenly realized that he hadn't seen her in a long time. After she left with her master, he had not met her even once. He wondered how powerful she was now and longed to see her soon.

Each of the ladies in the drawing was a peerless beauty. Qing Shui could not decide what his relationship with Di Chen was. It probably couldn't be considered stable.

This time, when he had passed through the Central Continent, he hadn't look for her but now, he wondered if he had done the right thing.

Wenren Wushuang was at the Qing residence. Qing Shui was certain that he would never leave her and would accompany her

until they were both old because she was all by herself.

Yiye Jiange was his friend and his master. More importantly, she knew him very well. She was his wife in name, but Qing Shui did not know how to deal with her. She seemed to lack worldly desires, or at least at the moment. Perhaps if he could eliminate the Lion King's Ridge in the future, that might change.

Hai Dongqing!

Qing Shui had almost forgotten about that lady. She had said that she would wait for him no matter how long it took. He wondered if that was true and how he should respond. He found his relationship with that woman rather miraculous. Actually, the fate that he shared with each of these incredible women was greatly mysterious and miraculous to him.

Qing Shui smiled when he looked at Canghai Mingyue. She was already his pampered wife. He could remember how stunned he was when he had seen her for the first time: her beauty that could topple kingdoms, that innate disdain in the expression of her eyes. He already had two children with her. They must have grown much taller by now.

Lady Duanmu!

Qing Shui also had not seen this woman in a long time. He forced himself not to think about it because their problems were not easily solvable. He did not mind her age and the fact that she already had a daughter. However, she seemed very bothered by

that. Thinking about her daughter, Qing Shui knew that it was difficult for them to reach a proper resolution. No one could help her if she could not overcome her own prejudices.

Maybe this was because he was too young now. Could things change after ten or twenty more years?

Qing Shui shook his head, realizing that he had quite a few troubles, especially when it came to relationships. The helplessness he felt when he thought about such matters made him uncomfortable. It was as if he simply could not control himself.

Qing Shui hoped nature would take its course, but there really were some things he could not do. He shook his head again and looked to the last portrait. It was the drawing of the woman in the crystal coffin. Her icy facial features were bone-chillingly beautiful and remained so even after they shared that wondrous experience.

Qing Shui could not help but remember the events of that day.

Suddenly, Qing Shui felt as if his soul had been transported to another place. As he looked around, he knew that he had reached a sort of environment that was similar to the 'dream among the sea of flowers'. This was an illusory plane and Qing Shui felt an unspoken misery.

Within the illusory plane, he saw a crystal hall! It must definitely have been that woman in the crystal coffin. After all, he was looking at the woman's portrait. Qing Shui was suddenly afraid of meeting that woman again. He did not know why, even though he

knew that she could not kill him in such an illusory plane. He wasn't even afraid that she would kill him, especially since she had spared him previously.

Qing Shui stood in the middle of the crystal palace. Not far from him, he spotted an extremely beautiful woman with an exceptionally icy stare which displayed her fierce independence. She was the woman that looked the closest to a true goddess.

Her hair was gathered in a high bun, her eyebrows curved gently, and her features were naturally beautiful even without any makeup on. She had a heavenly goddess-like beauty. Her white dress could not hide her gorgeous figure— that distinctive shoulder, the curve of those breasts that could steal one's soul, a waist like flowing satin— which seemed perfectly sculpted by God. Even her pair of exposed jade legs held a faint crystal-like glow...

She exuded a holy aura that repelled any sort of desecration. This was the type of woman that Qing Shui thought no one should approach. It wasn't that she was a cold person but rather that she had an innate aloofness that seemed to stem from her soul.

Qing Shui could not come up with a proper explanation for her appearance. He only knew that this was a sort of connection through their consciousness despite their distance. The only thing he could infer was that this occurrence was related to the Portraits of Beauty.

AST 887 – Stocism Of An Immortal, within 300,000 Li

At that time, Qing Shui left without even turning his head because he did not want to die and must not die. In addition to that, the woman had not intended to kill him. Even though she had attacked him twice, he was only injured. She definitely possessed the ability to kill him off each time. This meant that the woman had already spared him.

Even though they were now in a sort of shared conscious space, their thoughts were honest and they were really interacting with each other. Qing Shui felt a little awkward facing the woman in front of him. He did not know what to say. Besides, he did not feel like talking once he saw her cold expression.

The woman looked at Qing Shui coldly, knitting her beautiful brows. She seemed a little puzzled as she looked at her surroundings, then she looked at Qing Shui again. A slight relief quickly appeared in her pair of alluring eyes.

“Why are you here?” the woman asked.

This was the first time Qing Shui had heard her voice. With attractive icy features which could bring Qing Shui to bow down and pray to her, her voice was similarly devoid of any emotion. It was like the voice of an immortal, speaking directly into one’s soul.

“I have no idea. I don’t think this is reality,” Qing Shui shook his head and replied.

The woman turned away, casting her glance away from Qing Shui. Qing Shui looked at her jade-like legs which floated about three inches above the ground.

She continued looking around with in mild bewilderment, gliding around the place before she spoke again, “How did you enter this place previously?”

Qing Shui wasn't surprised by her question. He slowly explained, “Through a treasure map that I have somehow obtained. I was looking for treasures.”

The woman was stunned for a moment but she relaxed her brows slightly and said softly, “I am not sure how you are able to enter this place and even bring me here. But I know that you are controlling this. Don't ever think about this again. I don't want to see you. I'm afraid I can't fight the urge to kill you.”

This was the first time he heard this woman using a slightly gentle tone but he did not expect her words to be so bland. Well, now he could confirm that the woman did intentionally spare his life previously.

“Why didn't you kill me that time?” Qing Shui hesitated for a moment, before asking.

“No reason. Killing you was too easy,” the woman replied coldly, knitting her brows together again.

Qing Shui did not pursue the question further, he had nothing to present to her. He shook his head and said, “How did you end up laying dormant there? How were you poisoned so badly? How long were you there for?”

Qing Shui stated his questions not hoping to get any answers because he knew that woman would not tell him anything. Anyway, he did not really care what the woman thought of him so he asked what he wanted. From the start, the two of them had no intention to really interact, so if he tried his luck maybe he might even find out some hidden secrets or information about the Central Continent.

Qing Shui's words seemed to remind the woman about something. The poison in her body was really potent, otherwise she would not have fallen into such a deep slumber but this man managed to cure her. When she remembered what happened, she felt a little uneasy so she did not continue thinking about it.

“These are not questions that you should ask. There are things that you should not know right now. Just cherish what you have and continue living well.” the woman disappeared with a flash after she finished her sentence.

Qing Shui was shocked when he heard what she said. He did not expect her to say those words so he couldn't really come to terms with it. Furthermore, she could easily withdraw herself from this state.

Qing Shui suspected that using the Portraits of Beauty as a medium, he could interact with the woman in the picture through his consciousness. Could it be that the Art Maestro's art reached the level of drawing souls?

Perhaps such a phenomenon would only appear when one reached that level but that did not explain a very crucial detail. During the Art Maestro's time, these women were not even born.

Could it be that the Art Maestro drew these drawings from his past experiences? Could he have compiled these drawings with his knowledge of skeletal structures, physiognomy and other research? Putting aside people who genuinely looked alike, Qing Shui found it rather impossible that a drawing could look so much like an existing person. How does this explain how the Portraits of Beauty could create a divine connection? Why are the people he has met match the women in the Portraits of Beauty. Was it pure coincidence?

There were many things which simply could not be explained and could not be understood. There are millions and millions of coincidences in the world and not all resulted in something. But Qing Shui was convinced that the Portraits of Beauty could definitely create a divine connection!

After the woman disappeared, Qing Shui also disappeared from that space and returned to his Realm of the Violet Jade Immortal. He poured a cup of plum wine on his Jade embedded Tigerprint Table for himself and downed it. He felt extremely pleased. After that, he made himself some fish stew and turtle soup.

Even though the Realm of Violet Jade Immortal was also covered with earth, it was different from true reality. There was no dust in the realm and it was filled with Spiritual Qi. This part of the realm was like a room, he was standing on expensive mahogany flooring and the room was filled with many extravagances: his 'Magnificent Mountains and Rivers' screen, Eight Deities Mahogany Table, Jade-embedded Tiger print table, Hu Wei Imperial Tutor Chair, cabinets and much more. They were all pretty good pieces of furniture which he had gotten from Southern City Furniture Store to add to his collection.

This was like a large room which was formed by a combination of large screens which only left a two meter wide entrance. The 'room' was huge, he had a bed and he placed many of his valuable herbal embroidered cases and rare ingredients in there as well.

The other metals, violet jade, smithing table, etc. were placed outside on the earthen ground. This was because they would not be affected by any contact with ground and it was not suitable to have them in his 'room'.

Thinking about the divine connection he shared with the woman, he contemplated about how power determined everything in a world. For this world, martial prowess determined everything. As long as one had strength, one could obtain everything.

Conversely, money just becomes an accessory. That is not to say that money was not important since one needed money to support their cultivation. Even though there were many precious items and treasures that can't be obtained even with massive amounts of money, money could buy a person many medicinal pellets,

techniques and whatnots. Especially for beginners, there was a stark contrast between one who was rich and one who was poor.

Qing Shui immediately thought of Sun Yan. His body constitution was very unique. He could absorb the essence of gems and other such items to boost his cultivation. There should be a limit to his ability just like other forms of techniques, he probably could only absorb a limited amount of Spiritual Qi from these things before it reached a saturation point. He would probably have to utilize it or process it before he could continue absorbing another batch.

This was how his cultivation reached such levels even at his age.

If he did not have the backing of his family and his family did not have the money to support him when he was just starting out, then he wouldn't have been able to reach such success in the present day.

When he returned, he decided to go to the Dong residence to look for Dong Yan. He did not know if he would find Sun Yan there with Dong Yan, since his grandfather's birthday celebration was over.

Then, there was that woman from Mu Clan. Qing Shui did not know if that was his luck or curse with women...

Romantic relationships were the hardest to fathom and so intangible. They would suddenly befall a person, like a miracle. Then, when it was gone, one could not obtain it even if they tried

their hardest.

Two people in love was a beautiful thing, just like how people would reach immortality to be with the ones they loved until old age. It was true, that sort of feeling when one feels joined at the hip with one's lover, the telepathy... these were all indescribable feelings. That was when both parties in a relationship could nobly do anything for each other...

.....

After he ate some food, he started his training. His training list was now extremely long but he managed to do each of them orderly and sequentially. From talisman drawing, drawing, upgrading weapons and practicing his various techniques...

Not forgetting the Roc Form and Crane Slash!

Qing Shui was serious and hardworking when he trained. There was no one to disturb him in his realm so he could put all his focus on training. That was also the reason why his training was so effective.

For a person to get such conditions in the outside world, they would need to isolate themselves. It may appear very easy but it was not because people had their lives to live and they were not always presented with the opportunity to do so.

On the second day, Qing Shui brought along his spider again.

This time round, Qing Shui did not sneak around like before but proceed boldly and searched hard every time he reached a different mountain range.

Even though it was as if Five-Headed Demonic Spider had formed a new consciousness, it was still very familiar with the surroundings and had a lot of knowledge about the place, so Qing Shui always checked with it for updated intel.

He was now already accustomed to the immature-sounding voice of his Five-Headed Demonic Spider. He probably would be unable to adapt to his Five-Headed Demonic Spider if it still retained its previous appearance. Now its body was half its previous size and more importantly its pair of green flowing eyes were now a beautiful silvery white so it already looked much better.

This time, he was much quicker. Within half a month, he almost broke 300,000 li!

Throughout his journey, he did not meet anyone else but they met many demonic beasts, none of which dared challenge his Five-Headed Demonic Spider but instead fled for their lives. Qing Shui felt quite pleased when he saw such reactions...

As they headed deeper, Qing Shui could feel a growing sense of pressure. It was a sort of panicky feeling that came from within his soul. Luckily, he had his Nature Energy which he activated to the maximum degree and most importantly he had his Five-Headed Demonic Spider.

300,000 li was actually quite a short distance to Qing Shui but this was the longest time he used to cross this distance after he became powerful. He could actually use his Nine Continents Steps Effect to progress forward by 100,000 li each time but he did not want to miss any mountains so he took half a month to cover that distance.

Suddenly, within his sea of consciousness, Qing Shui heard his Five-Headed Demonic Spider's immature-sounding voice. It warned him that there was a powerful demonic beast near them.

Qing Shui's heart dropped. Throughout this half a month, he had met many demonic beasts, many of which could have easily killed him but once they saw his Five-Headed Demonic Spider, they just gave up and escaped with their tails between their legs.

However right now, this was the first time that his Five-Headed Demonic Spider actually warned that there was a powerful demonic beast near them. How powerful must another demonic beast be for his Five-Headed Demonic Spider to acknowledge its power? Qing Shui suddenly felt apprehensive but somehow also a little excited.

His Five-Headed Demonic Spider could basically kill him off in seconds, thus that demonic beast nearby should also be able to do the same. Even though he had his Five-Headed Demonic Spider this was still a very dangerous situation.

Qing Shui hesitated for a moment and asked his Five-Headed Demonic Spider if it had the confidence to defeat that demonic beast but it replied with an 'I don't know'...

AST 888 – Five-Eyed Lion Wolf King, Hovering Between Life And Death

Receiving the ‘I don’t know’ reply did not worry Qing Shui too much. Sometimes an uncertain reply like that wasn’t exactly bad, just like how his Five-Headed Demonic Spider was not directly answering whether it could or could not defeat that demonic beast. It actually meant that both demonic beasts had about the same strength or perhaps they were on the same level. If so, Qing Shui felt that it was unnecessary for him to feel burdened.

His Five-Headed Demonic Spider stared straight ahead, it stood in front of Qing Shui protecting him well with its body. Qing Shui was extremely proud of it. It indeed lived up to its position as a Martial Emperor, it already possessed an elementary level of wisdom.

Roar!

A loud resounding roar suddenly filled the air. The loud, earth-shaking roar reverberated through the valley, as if many demonic beasts had roared at the same time. It could definitely rival the Golden Jiao’s roar.

Chi Chi!

His Five-Headed Demonic Spider also produced a terrifyingly sharp screech. Qing Shui could already interpret the meaning of his Five-Headed Demonic Spider vocalizations. That was a call to warn off that opponent but the opponent responded with an even

more ferocious roar as if it deeply resented the Five-Headed Demonic Spider.

Within a short amount of time, a demonic beast appeared at the mountain peak not far from them. It was a gigantic demonic beast which resembled both a lion and a tiger but Qing Shui was startled when he saw the creature's head.

That disgusting looking demonic beast actually had five eyes on its head...

There were two pairs of eyes on its side and in the middle of its forehead, there was a vertically oriented large eye. The middle eye was twice the size of the other eyes and it emitted an eerie glow.

Five-eyed Lion Wolf King!

Qing Shui was shocked to his core. At the same time, he saw that this demonic beast which was almost the size of a small hill had a massive wolf-like tail which was almost 20m in length. He could instantly tell this Five-eyed Lion Wolf King was on the same level as his Five-Headed Demonic Spider.

Furthermore, it was only because his Five-Headed Demonic Spider had the breakthrough to the Martial Emperor Grade that it could be classified within the same class as this Five-eyed Lion Wolf King. If it was still in its previous form, it would have been instantly killed by this Five-eyed Lion Wolf King.

Qing Shui happened to also know something about this Five-eyed Lion Wolf King. Just like his Five-Headed Demonic Spider, while his Five-Headed Demonic Spider's strength corresponded with the number of heads it had, the Five-eyed Lion Wolf King's strength corresponded with the number of eyes it had. That meant that both their strengths were around the same level but it was difficult to tell which of them was the stronger one. The only thing that was certain was that they were both fearsome beasts that could strike fear into men.

Not even considering the vileness of his Five-Headed Demonic Spider, even bringing up its Corrosive Poison Web technique could cause one to turn pale in fear because it was something that should never be touched. On the other hand, the Five-eyed Lion Wolf King was even more creepy. People referred to those middle eyes that they possessed as the eyes of demons.

The Five-eyed Lion Wolf King's strongest points were its speed and its massive spirit energy. Its vertical middle eye could send out a powerful spirit energy attack which was almost impossible to avoid. It was rumored that an attack could adversely affect a person's three immortal souls and seven mortal forms or even cause them to lose one of these essential elements, causing total retardation. Despite this, the attack did not have a 100% success rate, it was still affected by the level of spirit energy the opponent had.

It was rumored these overly-eldritch eyes had a great limitation. It can only be used once and after the use of that move, the creature's strength would decrease by 10% and it will only recover its original stats after 24 hours.

Other than that, it was also a prolific fire-user. Its fire attacks were quite good and it was also strong with close combat, as it was fast and accurate.

There were very few cultivators in the main continent who actually used such spirit energy attacks and not many demonic beasts had such skills but many people lost their lives to such attacks or became mentally handicapped every year. Thus, most people would avoid battling with a demonic beast like that.

It was also said that once an artist reached the highest proficiency at drawing souls through his practice of the art of drawing, he would be able to redraw the lost portion of a person's soul whether it was a deficit from birth or injury. However, these sorts of acts were against the Heaven's will and there was no real proof that this was possible.

Qing Shui did not worry for his Five-Headed Demonic Spider. It had five brains and it was not as if it was not powerful. Besides he was also around to help, so they definitely had to get rid of that creepy looking demonic beast as soon as possible.

Roar! Roar!

The Five-eyed Lion Wolf King roared loudly at his Five-Headed Demonic Spider. Qing Shui found out from his Five-Headed Demonic Spider through their telepathy that they were in its territory so it was trying to chase them away. Qing Shui could not decide if they should leave but a large mountain was ahead of them. Even risking that he might find nothing, Qing Shui didn't want to miss any possible spots. He had to look there, if they found

any Sky Penetrating Grass which was above 5000 years old, he could end his mission.

Qing Shui communicated to his Five-Headed Demonic Spider and decided to launch a one-hit kill attack, either killing it or maiming it to the point it could not fight. There was still some distance between them so Qing Shui and his Five-Headed Demonic Spider approached the Five-eyed Lion Wolf King cautiously.

The Five-eyed Lion Wolf King, lording over all the demonic beasts within its territory, would never back down. Each area had their King Beasts (top tier beasts which were about the same strength). For example, the Five-eyed Lion Wolf King and Five-Headed Demonic Spider were the King Beasts here. For another it might be a Six-Headed Demonic Spider and Six-eyed Lion Wolf King.

As the distance between them narrowed, Qing Shui's heartbeat sped up because he still felt uneasy about his opponent's unique eye. After they reached the right distance, Qing Shui summoned his Thunderous Beast.

The Five-eyed Lion Wolf King paused when it saw the Thunderous Beast and a sinister glint flashed past its five eyes. Qing Shui could tell instantly that his opponent was extremely vigilant and was about to make a move. Qing Shui immediately commanded his Five-Headed Demonic Spider to attack.

At the same time, his Thunderous Beast launched its Violet Lightning Strike!

Violet Lightning Strike could disrupt the opponent's attack!

The Violet Lightning Strike was a very quick attack, while his Five-Headed Demonic Spider had already activated its Flying Spider Silk, boosting its own speed by five times. It rushed directly at Five-eyed Lion Wolf King

It was fast!

Extremely fast!

The Five-eyed Lion Wolf King immediately faced his Five-Headed Demonic Spider head on. Qing Shui felt somewhat relieved because he had an indescribable panic previously when he looked into its middle eye.

Violet Lightning Strike!

The Five-eyed Lion Wolf King was actually targeting Qing Shui and the Thunderous Beast but the speed of the Five-Headed Demonic Spider forced it to react to the Five-Headed Demonic Spider instead. When there was still some distance, the Five-eyed Lion Wolf King spat out two red fireballs.

Suddenly, it was struck by the Violet Lightning Strike!

It was paralyzed!

Descending Heavens Talisman!

At the same time, the effects of Qing Shui's Fiery Golden Eyes and Emperor's Qi came over the Five-eyed Lion Wolf King.

Poison Silk Entanglement!

Corrosive Poison Web!

The Five-Headed Demonic Spider was so quick that even the Five-eyed Lion Wolf King could not keep up with it at all. Previously, the potential of his Five-Headed Demonic Spider was limited by its speed. Now, after its metamorphosis, his Five-Headed Demonic Spider's weakness became its strength so it became incredibly powerful.

Even though this was the first time that Qing Shui used this tactic, he managed to coordinate the attack of his Thunderous Beast, his Five-Headed Demonic Spider and himself. It worked perfectly at restraining their opponent. Now, the Five-eyed Lion Wolf King was already trapped by the web of his Five-Headed Demonic Spider.

Cackling sounds accompanied the appearance of a blue glowing light as the Five-eyed Lion Wolf King howled in pain.

The poisonous web of his Five-Headed Demonic Spider was really quite formidable since the Five-eyed Lion Wolf King was unable to

tolerate the pain, not even taking into account that Qing Shui had lowered its overall stats.

This outcome was not beyond Qing Shui's expectation. He thought that it should be quite easy to get rid of this Five-eyed Lion Wolf King when he came to know that its ability was about that of his Five-Headed Demonic Spider but it was still that middle eye that made him wary.

The Five-eyed Lion Wolf King continued its cries of pain while his Five-Headed Demonic Spider continued to add more Corrosive Poison Web as a strand of spider silk as thick as a human's arm wrapped tightly around the Five-eyed Lion Wolf King's body.

The ear-piercing cries continued as Qing Shui also commanded his Thunderous Beast to continue attacking.

Just as Qing Shui looked at the Five-eyed Lion Wolf King's large malevolent-looking head, noticing that eye in the middle, that eye suddenly emitted a resplendent light. That magnificent light stunned Qing Shui for a moment.

Qing Shui knew that things were turning against him. Just as if a large 'Sky Sword' had pierced into his sea of consciousness, he felt as if his sea of consciousness was about to be split in two. That fearsome energy and that feeling as if it had reached his soul scared Qing Shui.

That large sword formed of spirit energy continued attacking. Qing Shui bore with the intense torture and began channeling his

own spirit energy to defend against it. However, he realized that this horrifying Qi from the sword was not something he could withstand at his current level.

Now, Qing Shui was really afraid. What if he became mentally handicapped because of this or even died? That would be such a waste...

He didn't wish to die so he activated everything he had. However, that Qi from the sword was really beyond him, he simply could not defend himself against it.

Qing Shui's spirit energy was quite strong but the Five-eyed Lion Wolf King was a Martial Emperor which specialized in such attacks.

Qing Shui did let down his guard but he did not expect that the Five-eyed Lion Wolf King would attack him instead of the Five-Headed Demonic Spider which had caused him the most damage. That attack which could only be used once, actually fell upon him...

Qing Shui found that there was nothing he could do, he pushed his Ancient Strengthening Technique, Nature Energy, Immovable mountains... to their limits.

Even with him using all the techniques he could, he was only able to slightly reduce the speed of that Qi from the sword. If this continued, he would be rendered useless once that Qi from the sword reached his Niwan Palace, he would just become a person

without any consciousness.

Niwan Palace was right in the middle of a person's sea of consciousness, its existence was most important. Qing Shui looked towards it and realized the position of his Yin-Yang Image. Qing Shui found a slight glimmer of hope when he saw his Yin-Yang Image whirring rapidly.

The ancient and profound Yin-Yang Image rotated with a desolate aura, heavy and strong, it possessed an inexpressible strength. Qing Shui felt himself calming down as he focused on the Yin-Yang Image.

The sword continued getting closer and closer. Qing Shui no longer attempted to resist, allowing it to continue slashing. Qing Shui did not know what to feel. Everything was blank. There was no fear, rather it was a type of empty void, just like that in Buddhist scriptures. Without any desire or want, as if death was unimportant or rather he was enlightened.

He was enlightened by the fact that he no longer had any control over survival. He had tried his best so he gave up on everything and found himself hovering between life and death once again.

AST 889 – Alive, Location Of The Sky

Penetrating Grass, Obstruction

At that moment, Qing Shui did not look at the ‘Sky Sword’. He also did not notice that at the point that the Qi from the sword headed towards his Niwan Palace, the Yin-Yang fish in his Yin-Yang Image suddenly lit up. Black then white, in an instant they merged together and that archaic yet majestic light shattered the sword’s qi.

After an unknown amount of time, Qing Shui finally stirred as if he had woken up from a deep dream. He looked towards his Niwan Palace and discovered that nothing had changed but when he saw his Yin-Yang Image he was stunned.

The size of the Yin-Yang Image had increased significantly. From the initial size of a walnut, it had grown continually, constantly evolving. He could tell that it had grown by at least one third.

It was more intense, more robust, more encompassing. As he observed the current state of his Yin-Yang Image, he could feel that his spirit energy had become stronger once again. There was clearly much more spirit energy in his sea of consciousness.

It was a blessing in disguise after all. He managed to benefit greatly from this incident and there was a distinctive boost in the amount of his spirit energy. But, Qing Shui could not deny that the ‘Sky Sword’, the sort of sword made of spirit energy, had really driven him to a corner. Forced to confront death, one will survive and this definitely described his current situation.

He could not help remembering the words that the Abbot from the Golden Buddha Temple said to him. He had an affinity with Buddha. Was him entering that sense of emptiness a sign of his affinity?

After he withdrew from his sea of consciousness, he found that he was still standing at the same spot. He saw the dead Five-eyed Lion Wolf King and his Five-Headed Demonic Spider was calling him repeatedly.

Qing Shui smiled and patted his Five-Headed Demonic Spider. Qing Shui was rather surprised that he could sense some anxiousness in its immature-sounding voice. Previously, when he was at the entrance of the Crystal Palace, interacting telepathically with the old turtle he felt like he was ‘talking’ to metal. Even when that turtle sighed, he could not feel any emotions in its ‘speech’.

Was this because of the mutation of his Five-Headed Demonic Spider?

Qing Shui looked at the unrecognizable carcass of the recently dead Five-eyed Lion Wolf King which had already been corroded by the Corrosive Poison Web. He salvaged its core, some bones and its blood...

Chi Chi!

Qing Shui heard his Five-Headed Demonic Spider and turned to communicate with it. It asked for the core and Qing Shui

immediately handed the core to it. The core was valuable but it was nothing compared to the value of his Five-Headed Demonic Spider.

His Five-Headed Demonic Spider swallowed it happily. Qing Shui waited patiently but realized that the core only increased his Five-Headed Demonic Spider's strength by a very small fraction. Thankfully, it boosted its spirit energy quite significantly.

“It seems that becoming a Martial Emperor will make it harder to increase one's strength,” Qing Shui contemplated.

Would his Beast Pill still have the same effect on a Martial Emperor? If so, that would mean that it was really a very powerful medicine.

He got the results of his experimentation rather quickly. Even feeding his Five-Headed Demonic Spider five Beast Pills did not raise its strength by even 10%, the increase was only 5%.

Qing Shui did not know if he should feel disappointed. That mere 5% increase was still numerically much larger than any other 50% increase in strength he had observed. Oddly, his Five-Headed Demonic Spider seemed visibly very happy.

At that point, he realized that once he reached Martial Emperor, many of his items might lose their value to him...

This battle had given a large boost to Qing Shui's confidence. He

also gained quite a lot. With his stronger spirit energy, the prowess of his Primordial Flame Ball also went up significantly and his connections with his demonic beasts were also enhanced.

Qing Shui looked towards the lofty mountain ahead and he ventured forward with his Five-Headed Demonic Spider. Since they had already defeated the Five-eyed Lion Wolf King, they would not meet any other powerful demonic beasts.

Lower Grade One Martial Emperor demonic beasts were active within the area 100,000 li from their 300,000 li boundary. Whereas 500,000 li from where they were, there were demonic beasts which were more powerful than it. This was the information that he got from his Five-Headed Demonic Spider.

Even if they were more powerful, they were probably at Grade Two Martial Emperor or the peak of Grade One Martial Emperor. Though demonic beasts at Grade One Martial Emperor were already enough deterrence to humans.

The conditions were very strict for one to reach the realm of Martial Emperor. Even a million people could not match the existence of a single Martial Emperor.

Regardless demonic beasts or humans, Martial Emperors exist as supreme beings. Qing Shui found it incredible that he and his Five-Headed Demonic Spider actually managed to kill a Martial Emperor demonic beast. This lethal combination of his ability to reduce the opponent's overall stats and the power of his Five-Headed Demonic Spider definitely made it much easier to kill other demonic beasts who were on the same level as his Five-Headed

Demonic Spider.

The precipitous and dangerous paths were merely like flat ground to Qing Shui and his Five-Headed Demonic Spider and they quickly sprinted towards the peak.

Qing Shui had a feeling that the Sky Penetrating Grass would be at the very top of the mountain so he rushed all the way to the top. If it wasn't there, he could search for it as he came down.

Both of their speeds were very fast so they did not take much time to reach the peak of the tall mountain. The wind was always strong at the peak of any mountain, in addition to that the vegetation on this particular mountain was rather dense, so it made the task of searching quite difficult for Qing Shui.

Standing at the particular peak he was, he saw that there was another northern peak which was visibly taller so he quickly rushed towards that point.

When he reached that spot, he realized that the area was not small. Luckily, Qing Shui's spiritual sense was much stronger than before. He activated his spiritual sense and started searching. He had an unique spiritual sense which was extremely keen. This was not something that others could follow.

Even so, such a scanning process would mean that he missed some details. Everything has its pros and cons. Just as eyes could be fooled by illusions, similarly, one's spiritual sense could also be fooled.

For example, if the medicinal herb hid its Spiritual Qi, it could easily deceive one's spiritual sense.

However, Qing Shui knew that the Sky Penetrating Grass exposes its Qi so he used his spiritual sense. His main aim was the grass and even if he missed whatever chance encounters, he did not care. There were so many mountains and the area was huge, if he really searched with his eyes, how much time would he need?

Qing Shui was very decisive when it came to knowing what to give up and what to keep.

Qing Shui finished searching the huge area very quickly but was disappointed. Each time he sensed a wave of potential Qi, he only found some metallic rocks or moderately valuable medicinal herbs.

Unfortunately, they were of little interest to Qing Shui. Despite that, he still stored them in the Realm of the Violet Jade Immortal. If one tried too hard, higher hopes would lead to greater disappointment.

With how things were, he was prepared to stay in this area much longer. Anyway it did not hinder his cultivation and he could gather some other good items. The concentration of Spiritual Qi in the Sky Penetrating Mountains meant that it could support many rare and aged herbs.

Within a day, Qing Shui finished searching the entire mountain. He managed to get quite a few items, it was quite a harvest but Qing Shui longed to immediately get his hands on a Sky

Penetrating Grass but he knew that it was just wishful thinking.

After three months...

Qing Shui was already searching at the range of 480,000 li. The mountains around this area were also getting taller. It gave Qing Shui the impression that he would be able to find the Sky Penetrating Grass soon. However, it was getting dangerous, so he proceeded slowly. He had to familiarize himself with the place so that he could outmaneuver any of his enemies.

He sighed again as he stood on another mountain peak, his Five-Headed Demonic Spider was beside him. He did not know how many mountains he had conquered over these few months. He obtained many items but just not what he was looking for.

Qing Shui was already numbed to the disappointment. Previously, he had always held his hopes high whenever he saw a tall, lofty mountain. However, he lost his sense of anticipation after multiple failed attempts to find the grass.

Now, he had changed his mentality. He only aimed to search through every mountain he came across, without considering whether a particular mountain contained the grass. He just wanted to clear each mountain as fast as possible.

Another half a month passed...

Qing Shui spotted a majestic white mountain range which seemed to be the tallest among the Sky Penetrating Mountains, however, it was just his supposition. The edges were so steep that

one could only reach the peak by flight.

Suddenly, Qing Shui sensed that he could definitely find the Sky Penetrating Grass there, he perceived this through his sea of consciousness, so it stirred up his excitement once again.

As he watched the mountain from a distance, Qing Shui could even feel himself trembling a little from his excitement. He had already become nearly apathetic to the matter and now he suddenly regained his anticipation.

A feeling was not enough to make Qing Shui so excited, rather it was a mysterious perception somewhat confirmed by his spiritual sense. He had had this feeling before.

Every now and then, there was a small chance of his spiritual sense extending beyond its normal range. During such an occasion, his Lingtai Accupoint would be activated and everything around him would appear clearly within his spiritual sense. Even though it only lasted a short second, he definitely felt the presence of the Sky Penetrating Grass.

Qing Shui was filled with intense emotions as he stared ahead. Unfortunately, he also felt the presence of a strong demonic beast near the Sky Penetrating Grass, it was a huge gorilla-like monkey.

Long-armed Vicious Monkey King!

Even though Qing Shui only had a glimpse of it, he could

recognize that gigantic white Monkey King. It was about 30 meters tall, it was like a herculean giant with sinewy arms that drooped down to its ankles. Its legs were similarly thick and muscular. Qing Shui could instantly tell that the demonic beast was fearsomely strong and that his Five-Headed Demonic Spider was no match for it.

Just then, he heard the immature-sounding voice of his Five-Headed Demonic Spider.

It told him that it could not defeat the Long-armed Vicious Monkey King.

Qing Shui asked how large the difference between their strengths were and was speechless when he came to know his demonic beast did not even have half the Long-Armed Vicious Monkey King's strength.

Qing Shui did not know what to do. If that difference was so great, the effects of the debuffs wouldn't change the outcome of the battle. The web of his Five-Headed Demonic Spider might not even be able to trap that demonic beast and he suspected that the Violet Lightning Strike might not be able to paralyze that demonic beast long enough for them to utilize any lethal moves on it.

However, the Sky Penetrating Grass was just within his grasp, it would be such a pity if he just gave up on it. They definitely could not leave, they'd just have to fight... but that was courting death because the Long-armed Vicious Monkey King was at least a Grade 2 Martial Emperor.

AST 890 – Long-Armed Vicious Monkey King, The Difficult Attempt To Lure The Enemy Away

The gap in abilities between each grade of the Martial Emperor realm was very wide and since he had not the power to go against the opponent, he could only choose to “steal”. Qing Shui had everything thought out. It would only be courting death if he were to fight head-on with the Long-armed Vicious Monkey King.

Qing Shui had already located the position of the Sky Penetrating Grass through his spiritual sense and of course, knew where the Long-armed Vicious Monkey King was located. It was not far away from the two Sky Penetrating Grass.

He knew that it would be very difficult to get to them without the Long-armed Vicious Monkey King’s realizing it but fortunately, Qing Shui had the Realm of the Violet Jade Immortal. He called back the Five-Headed Demonic Spider and slowly headed up that silvery white mountain.

He walked very slowly, thinking of how he could get his hands on that Sky Penetrating Grass. He had already gotten his hands on one in that place with the deity. He scanned with his spiritual sense briefly and was affirmative that these two Sky Penetrating Grass were definitely at least 5,000 years of age or more. However, he didn’t know why that Long-armed Vicious Monkey King had not taken it.

Could it be that this medicinal herb was already over 9,000

years?

Was it waiting for them to reach 10,000 years of age?

Qing Shui thought about it, feeling puzzled. This was not impossible. The 10,000th year was also a turning point for medicinal herbs, a great one. Even the most useless medicinal herb would have a “Immortal Grass Qi” when they’ve reached 10,000 years of age. This was something very precious.

Qing Shui didn’t care about it right now. He was trying to think of how he could make this powerful demonic beast leave this place for a short while. As long as it left, everything would be easier. He could also make his escape immediately after getting the Sky Penetrating Grass.

Once he reached the foot of the mountain, Qing Shui sensed a spiritual sense scanning in his direction but since he couldn’t avoid it, he naturally let the spiritual sense hit him but still tried his best to conceal his abilities.

A tremendous ape’s cry rang out!

Qing Shui had never thought that an ape’s cry could be so terrifying. It was so terrifying that it was as if it could tear his heart apart. Just from its cry alone, one could sense that it was a huge monster...

Qing Shui didn’t care about that spiritual sense and headed on

the straight path up that steep mountain, as if sensing that the powerful spiritual sense was getting closer to it.

Ignoring that spiritual sense, Qing Shui headed for the top of the mountain, not anxious. He was very certain that it would definitely not be too far away from that Sky Penetrating Grass and thus he could advance so bravely.

The Five-Headed Demonic Spider was arranged to be in another direction and not allowed to get too near. Qing Shui was thinking of trying to lure the enemy away but it was just that the target was too powerful and he could not bear to sacrifice the Five-Headed Demonic Spider.

Therefore, Qing Shui decided to take the risk himself while communicating with the Five-Headed Demonic Spider, thinking about how he should go about it.

The ape's cry grew increasingly piercing and ferocious and Qing Shui could tell that it was trying to show off its might and had the intention to scare Qing Shui off. Although his cultivation level was not at a level that it would feel concerned over, there was still another Five-Headed Demonic Spider and it should be able to sense that the other party was here to snatch the treasures it was guarding.

Qing Shui went all the way up to the peak of the mountain. After all, it was huge and thus even though he had arrived at the peak, he could not see the huge Long-armed Vicious Monkey King. The mountain's peak was also covered with a large spread of forest which was several hundred feet tall and densely packed together,

appearing to be even more majestic from the mountain's peak.

Qing Shui looked around the surroundings and unleashed his spiritual sense, observing the movements of that Long-armed Vicious Monkey King before slowly closing in on the place he was familiar with. At the same time, he also started to let the Five-Headed Demonic Spider head up in the direction of the mountain's peak.

It was because Qing Shui realized that the terrain of this mountain's peak was especially suitable for the Five-Headed Demonic Spider as its Corrosive Poison Net could exist for a very long time and this place was suitable for creating webs...

When Qing Shui first checked it out, there were no descriptions of this application in the Five-Headed Demonic Spider's battle techniques. However, subconsciously, he felt that spiders must create webs and thus when he tested out the Five-Headed Demonic Spider's abilities, he specially let it form webs.

The moment it did, he understood. The Five-Headed Demonic Spider told him that it was for defense purposes, such as forming webs at caves entrances or by surrounding itself with webs.

The mountain terrain was not flat and thus there were many spots which were suitable for forming webs. The Five-Headed Demonic Spider's webs were very big and could reach out to a large area. It was very useful when fighting against an existence of the same level.

If they were to make use of the geographical advantages, just one Five-Headed Demonic Spider could make many demonic beasts of a similar level be at a loss and if they were not careful, they might not even be left with a corpse. It was because they would be in great trouble if they were to be tangled up in the Five-Headed Demonic Spider's webs.

Qing Shui stopped moving. He was still very far away from where the Long-armed Vicious Monkey King was at, but he was now thinking of changing methods. He knew that he must not be impatient, otherwise he would definitely be in trouble.

Communicating through their thoughts, Qing Shui let the Five-Headed Demonic Spider come towards him from another direction while he set up a tent and thought about how he could lure away the Long-armed Vicious Monkey King.

What had made Qing Shui feel gloomy was that this demonic beast seemed to be able to sense his thoughts and plans and simply refused to leave its spot. This also left him feeling quite helpless.

Not very long later, the Five-Headed Demonic Spider appeared next to Qing Shui. Qing Shui first let it scatter out its Corrosive Poison Web densely in the area in multiple layers.

He then released a hundred Demonic Spiders and called out the Diamond Gigantic Elephant, unleashing multiple Mighty Elephant Stomps and cries in the area. He also called out the Fire Bird and the Ten Thousand Poisonous Violet Sable...

Qing Shui even scattered some poison on the densely packed spider webs, telling his demonic beasts that they should not leave the area covered by the spider webs, before telling them to cry out as if they were putting up a demonstration of their powers.

Qing Shui didn't know if, other than the Five-Headed Demonic Spider, the demonic beasts would be able to cause it to panic.

However, thankfully, he still had the Five-Headed Demonic Spider.

Qing Shui left the place and slowly headed deeper in. He had not walked too far in when he sensed a gushing aura before hearing a furious bellow. The ape's cry was a bit piercing to the ear.

However, Qing Shui still advanced carefully. He was testing the Long-armed Vicious Monkey King's limits and waiting for it to respond. He was already very close, being less than 1,000 meters away.

Moreover, Qing Shui's spiritual sense could already sense its existence. At this moment, Qing Shui's heart thumped very quickly because of the Long-armed Vicious Monkey King and even for himself this 1,000 meters would only take but a second to cross.

Expert level Focused Concentration!

Qing Shui started his Expert level Focused Concentration and not only did his abilities increase by a little, more importantly his

concentration would be focused and in this condition, the prowess of both his attacks and defenses could be raised by about 20%. it could also increase his resistance to spirit energy attacks by a lot, allowing his spirit energy to be better displayed.

Now, Qing Shui was focusing primarily in order to allow his spiritual sense to react extremely quickly.

Suddenly, Qing Shui dashed forth at rapid speed. His current speed had already exceeded supersonic speed and it would only take him a moment to cross 1,000 meters. What was between Qing Shui and the Long-armed Vicious Monkey King was a horizontal stretch of mountains.

Qing Shui dashed up the top of a mountain and in that instant, he chose to enter the Realm of the Violet Jade Immortal.

Therefore, after Qing Shui crossed the mountains and was not far away from the Long-armed Vicious Monkey King, he disappeared.

Completely disappeared!

After Qing Shui entered the Realm of the Violet Jade Immortal, his heart started to palpitate at an increasing rate. That moment he had just been through was extremely dangerous and if he was not careful, he could have been left dead.

After the Long-armed Vicious Monkey King saw that Qing Shui was approaching, with a slight hesitation, its huge body flashed

and its big arms that were like a “Jiao” as they lashed out towards Qing Shui. In that instant, a huge black hole appeared in the air.

Qing Shui disappeared but the Long-armed Vicious Monkey King looked around, feeling dubious. Earlier, what he hit was Qing Shui’s after image, but now Qing Shui had disappeared right before its eyes and it couldn’t even sense anything with its spiritual sense. Therefore, he felt that Qing Shui must have been devoured by the black hole it had created.

And right now, Qing Shui was looking out of the realm at the Long-armed Vicious Monkey King while letting the Five-Headed Demonic Spider get closer, creating webs as it advanced. He hoped to be able to lure the Long-armed Vicious Monkey King some distance away.

Qing Shui looked at the Long-armed Vicious Monkey King then at the two Sky Penetrating Grass which were not very far away. He was very agitated. Even though they were right in front of his eyes, he could not lay his hands on them.

In order to get something, one must be able to pay the price for it.

Qing Shui let an ordinary Demonic Spider out and let it run far away. However, it was quickly killed by the Long-armed Vicious Monkey King while the Long-armed Vicious Monkey King didn’t even move an inch.

Qing Shui hesitated and then called out another beast but this

time, it was a Jade Emperor Bee. Similarly, it was not able to let the Long-armed Vicious Monkey King move a single step but its stance was slightly inclined forward.

Qing Shui then released two Demonic Spiders!

Two Jade Emperor Bees!

Three!

Four!

...

Qing Shui felt very helpless. Each time he sent them out, he felt horrible. Although these were not humans and could not be compared to the other demonic beasts such as the Diamond Gigantic Elephant and the Fire Bird, they had all belonged to him. He would feel sad even if he were to break the tea set he used often, let alone them. They were unlike the black fish and turtles and thus he felt a little sad.

At the same time, he continued to communicate with the Five-Headed Demonic Spider, letting it speed up its rate of advancement. However, he still got it to create its webs properly, allowing it to put up some momentary defenses.

Qing Shui was now very agitated since the Long-armed Vicious Monkey King had walked several tens of meters away and at this

moment, the Five-Headed Demonic Spider had already appeared on the mountain range.

Qing Shui was very agitated. Whether or not this plan would be a success would be dependent on this now. He quickly urged the Five-Headed Demonic Spider to form its webs properly, since as long as it could bide for a short moment, it would be safe.

Chi chi!

The Five-Headed Demonic Spider cried out toward the Long-armed Vicious Monkey King, as if challenging it.

This made Qing Shui both happy and worried. He was happy that this Five-Headed Demonic Spider was very clever and probably had a bright future before it. After Qing Shui tensed up, he stared at the Long-armed Vicious Monkey King's huge body.

Poison Silk Entanglement!

The Five-Headed Demonic Spider suddenly unleashed the Poison Silk Entanglement at the Long-armed Vicious Monkey King.

Flying Spider Silk!

Corrosive Poison Web!

At this moment, the Five-Headed Demonic Spider circulated its

abilities to its limits, trying the best it could to agitate the Long-armed Vicious Monkey King.

After letting out a huge bellow which was still slightly high pitched, the Long-armed Vicious Monkey King shot toward the Five-Headed Demonic Spider.

Almost at the same time, after taking the Gale Pellet and the Agility-Enhancing Fruit, Qing Shui also dashed out. His goal: the Sky Penetrating Grass.

The Five-Headed Demonic Spider's speed was also very fast. Having increased by five times, it would not lose to the Long-armed Vicious Monkey King in terms of speed. It threw out its Corrosive Poison Webs repeatedly toward the Long-armed Vicious Monkey King.

AST 891 – Getting Hold Of The Sky

Penetrating Grass, Escaping In A Pathetic State

Before Qing Shui dashed out, he circulated all his abilities to their limits, not having the wishful thought that he would be able to stop the opponent's attack. However, sometimes, doing this could still save his life.

The Long-armed Vicious Monkey King noticed him the moment he dashed out. Letting out a furious bellow as if he was going to tear the sky apart, he ignored the Five-Headed Demonic Spider and dashed for Qing Shui.

The Five-Headed Demonic Spider naturally would not allow the Long-armed Vicious Monkey King to attack Qing Shui and quickly followed. Its spider webs had tightly wrapped around the Long-armed Vicious Monkey King but the latter was still dashing toward Qing Shui.

The strength of the Five-Headed Demonic Spider couldn't be compared to that of the Long-armed Vicious Monkey King and the spider webs were quickly torn up. Even the Five-Headed Demonic Spider was tugged and sent flying toward the Long-armed Vicious Monkey King.

Corrosive Poison Web!

Corrosive Poison Web!

...

A few layers of the Five-Headed Demonic Spider's poisonous web were thrown out toward the Long-armed Vicious Monkey King. In mid-air the Five-Headed Demonic Spider tried very hard to change its direction.

With this help, Qing Shui managed to gain some time and he had reached the Sky Penetrating Grass. Reaching out his two hands, he grabbed one with each hand and tugged them out fiercely.

He succeeded!

Qing Shui did not have the time to feel happy when he sensed a huge force whipping out toward him. There was no way he could avoid it. Qing Shui was already using the Seven Star Armored Vest but he knew that this little defense would do him no good.

He didn't have enough time to return to the Realm of the Violet Jade Immortal. Abruptly flying up, his body inclined forward, he concurrently used the Heavenly Palace's "Divinity Protection" and the "Seemingly Sealed Shut" from his Taichi Fist techniques.

Boom!

Qing Shui was blasted out like an arrow and while in mid-air, his consciousness was blurred. However, he knew that he mustn't pass out. The tremendous pain he was feeling also woke him up

instantaneously.

Fresh blood splurged out freely and was even flowing out from his ears, nose and eyes. Other than his heart, all his other internal organs had been badly damaged...

Earlier, he had already checked out the direction and called for the Five-Headed Demonic Spider to wait for him there. Therefore, Qing Shui was caught by the Five-Headed Demonic Spider and the strong impact once again hurt Qing Shui.

The Five-Headed Demonic Spider brought Qing Shui with it as it dashed off, swift as the wind. It deliberately looked for positions where the webs had been formed and it worked its way through them like a fish in water. Moreover, in the condition where the “Flying Spider Silk” was activated, its speed was definitely extremely powerful.

The Long-armed Vicious Monkey King bellowed out and chased after the Five-Headed Demonic Spider. At the start, he stomped through several tens of the Corrosive Poison Webs and the webs’ extremely sticky and corrosive nature gradually slowed the big fellow down.

Qing Shui didn’t pay any heed to it. The moment his body recovered a little, he immediately took out a petal of the “Golden Buddha Aura Lotus”, eating it. Earlier, even with the Seven Star Armored Vest, Divinity Protection and Seemingly Sealed Shut activated, he was still almost instantly killed. Toward the end, he had even used the boost from the impact.

He had no other way out but to do this. Otherwise, he wouldn't have gotten his hands on the Sky Penetrating Grass. Moreover, he had also relied on the fact that he had the Golden Buddha Aura Lotus in the Realm of the Violet Jade Immortal which could extend his life.

This was how powerful a divine medicine was. Qing Shui recovered at such a rapid speed that it could be seen with the naked eye and the unbearable pain also gradually subsided.

Fiery Golden Eyes!

Emperor's Qi!

Once he regained his abilities, Qing Shui didn't stand on ceremony and just weakened his opponent before feeding the Five-Headed Demonic Spider one Gale Pellet. The pill it had taken earlier should be wearing off soon. Although the Five-Headed Demonic Spider's Corrosive Poison Web caused the Long-armed Vicious Monkey King's snow white fur to turn into an extremely bad state, they didn't cause it too much damage.

This Long-armed Vicious Monkey King had also relied on its powerful physical strength to push forth relentlessly. However, it now discovered that its speed was slightly lacking and there were poisonous webs in the surroundings, which were driving it crazy.

And Qing Shui's amazing weakening impact was also driving it crazy.

Qing Shui let the Five-Headed Demonic Spider head back to where he had set up the tent earlier. His other demonic beasts were still there and he needed to quickly leave this place with them. If the Long-armed Vicious Monkey King had some killing technique, they would be in trouble.

Once they arrived at the tent, Qing Shui quickly put them all in the Realm of the Violet Jade Immortal, even the Five-Headed Demonic Spider and himself.

Almost at the same moment he entered, a huge gush of power swept by where Qing Shui was standing earlier like an impact wave, turning everything in the surroundings into dust. The Long-armed Vicious Monkey King let out a furious bellow which could be clearly heard across 10,000 li.

Only after entering the Realm of the Violet Jade Immortal did Qing Shui truly feel relieved. He looked at how half of the “silver mountain” outside had been flattened. The Long-armed Vicious Monkey King was still venting its frustrations incessantly.

In this dog eat dog world, this was how things were. There were no owners to heavenly and earthly treasures. Looking at that ferocious demonic beast outside, Qing Shui could only say that it was just plain unlucky.

Looking at the two Sky Penetrating Grass which he had tugged out, Qing Shui realized that although their roots were torn off, it might not affect their growth. Qing Shui quickly planted one of the

two in the soil.

Qing Shui intended to use the other one to refine medicine and thus didn't plant it. Looking at the three Sky Penetrating Grass he had in total, each of them having an age of over 5,000 years, moreover with two of them close to 10,000 years, Qing Shui was very agitated.

It has been very long since he had left Greencloud Continent and now his goal was accomplished. Moreover, he had also gained a lot of benefits. This time around, the Five-Headed Demonic Spider was the most useful. Otherwise, there was no way that he would be able to get the Sky Penetrating Grass from the Long-armed Vicious Monkey King.

Regulating his breathing, recuperating, cultivating!

Qing Shui was previously seriously damaged by the Long-armed Vicious Monkey King's impact. Although it was healed by the Golden Buddha Aura Lotus, it still required some time before he could completely recover. Now, he was in the Realm of the Violet Jade Immortal and thus it would not take more than a few days time.

However, during those few days, Qing Shui would not perform alchemy. He wanted to perform alchemy only after his abilities and condition has been returned to their optimal state. The medicinal herbs were hard to come by and he could not allow for there to be any mistakes.

Every once in awhile, Qing Shui would look out. He realized that the Long-armed Vicious Monkey King was still circling the place, bellowing non-stop. The entire silver mountain had been thrashed.

Looking at how it was late and his time in the Realm of the Violet Jade Immortal was going to be up soon, Qing Shui directly left the Realm of the Violet Jade Immortal to take a look at where the Long-armed Vicious Monkey King was in case it would dash toward them.

Nine Continents Steps!

Qing Shui used the Nine Continents Steps.

He then repeated it again.

The first time, he was brought 200,000 li away and the second time, he was brought 100,000 li away. It was because Qing Shui wanted to head to where that deity was, to the place where he had been together with Mu Qing. Qing Shui wanted to stay there for some time.

Now, Qing Shui was 300,000 li away. By rights, if he were to travel 200,000 li away for each of the time he used the Nine Continents Steps, he would be able to reach 400,000 li away. However, this time around, Qing Shui wanted to go kill that Golden Jiao King.

After all, he now had the Five-Headed Demonic Spider and it

shouldn't be too hard for him to kill it. Qing Shui wanted the materials from the Golden Jiao King. Previously, even the 10,000 Years Coldsteel Needle was not able to pierce through it. The reason why Qing Shui had made this decision was also because he now had the Five-Headed Demonic Spider. Otherwise, he would just make his escape. With his current abilities, he would only end up being instantly killed if he were to encounter the Golden Jiao King.

It was already late and he had already used up the time in the Realm of the Violet Jade Immortal and thus he could only wait till the second day if he wished to enter the realm. He couldn't enter the Realm of the Violet Jade Immortal, nor could he use the Nine Continents Steps. Now, at 200,000 li deep in the mountains, Qing Shui didn't need to worry. It was because he still had the Five-Headed Demonic Spider, which was an unrivaled existence in this area.

He found an empty spot, set up his tent and let out his demonic beasts to get some fresh air. They were in the wilderness and he decided to let them get some fresh air while taking turns to be on guard while he himself lay down on the bed, thinking of things.

Now, the thing he thought about the most was the Ren Meridian Strengthening Pellet and the Du Meridian Strengthening Pellet. Their alchemy recipes appeared clearly in Qing Shui's mind and other than the Sky Penetrating Grass, all the other ingredients were fully prepared. Now that he had gotten his hands on the Sky Penetrating Grass, everything was ready.

Qing Shui only entered the Realm of the Violet Jade Immortal in

the later part of the night, entering with the Five-Headed Demonic Spider and the others. After a round of cultivation, Qing Shui started to prepare the medicinal herbs he needed.

He then tempered the medicinal herbs. This preparation work took a lot of time as well. Just like that, preparing some after a while of cultivation, he only finished up when it was time for him to leave the Realm of the Violet Jade Immortal.

Leaving the Realm of the Violet Jade Immortal, Qing Shui headed towards the Golden Jiao King's nest with the Five-Headed Demonic Spider. They neither traveled at a fast nor a slow speed. Qing Shui planned to reach it before daybreak.

To have encountered a demonic beast at this level, other than the Thunderous Beast, all the other demonic beasts he had were of no use at all. And even the Thunderous Beast could only provide support. Actually, the Diamond Gigantic Elephant could do the same, such as to use the Vajra Subdues Demons. However, it was a pity that their abilities were too weak. Otherwise, their battle techniques would be very heaven-defying.

It seemed that he would need to raise the abilities of these demonic beasts in the future. Their progress in the Realm of the Violet Jade Immortal was not slow but to Qing Shui it was still slow.

Qing Shui didn't wish to see their progress be so slow. At the very least, he would need to try to let his demonic beasts reach the level the Five-Headed Demonic Spider was at as soon as possible.

Thinking about it, it seemed to be very difficult. It was very difficult to attain a breakthrough to the Martial Emperor level. There was still a very long path on which he would have to travel. He had refining demon, he had the Ice Snow Sacred Fruit and now he had the Jade Spirit Fruit Tree, he was still very confident.

Qing Shui once again went up to the nest of the Golden Jiao King. Although the Golden Jiao King's body was much longer than that Long-armed Vicious Monkey King, it was not as wide. The Golden Jiao King's body was primarily long and although it was many times longer than the Long-armed Vicious Monkey King, it was much weaker. Now, the Golden Jiao King was probably weaker than the Five-Headed Demonic Spider.

Roar!

This time around, from afar, he could already hear the Golden Jiao King's huge roar. It might be because of the Five-Headed Demonic Spider's aura. Very quickly, Qing Shui once again saw that familiar golden colored figure circling in mid-air.

Qing Shui had to admit that this Golden Jiao King was really handsome looking and its cry was a little like that of a Jiao King's howl, giving off a sense of astonishment. It was a pity that after looking at its horrible looking head, all that feeling from earlier disappeared.

Qing Shui stood there, not moving, speechless. It was because when the Golden Jiao King saw the Five-Headed Demonic Spider,

it abruptly dashed down, bringing about a huge splashing sound before it turned completely silent.

It ran away?

Qing Shui had not expected that such a powerful demonic beast would throw away its pride and escape.

Qing Shui and the Five-Headed Demonic Spider rushed to where the Golden Jiao King had appeared earlier. It was only then that he did realized that there was an inner sea in this area. The previous time Qing Shui had been forced to make his escape in a pathetic state and had not noticed this sea.

The water of this inner sea was a faint golden color and appeared to be extremely beautiful. Moreover, the Spiritual Qi in this water seemed to be very high. Thinking about this Golden Jiao King entering the water, Qing Shui once again recalled that [ancient poetry](#), ‘Regardless of its height, any mountain can be famous with the presence of an immortal; regardless of its depth, any water can be holy with the presence of a Jiao King.’

A Chinese poem written by Liu Yuxi, a Tang poet.

AST 892 – Golden Snake Grass, Silver Snake Grass, Ren Meridian Strengthening Pellet

Although this Golden Jiao was not a true dragon, it was still uncertain whether if the dragons from the legends truly existed. Qing Shui believed that they existed but they might not be as mystical as he thought. After all, Qing Shui's idea of them was that they were a god-like existence, it was a concept that he refused to change.

Perhaps dragons in the World of the Nine Continents were just extremely strong Demonic Beasts. They were probably not the godly chinese dragons that Qing Shui imagined. However, they were likely to be very strong, they might even have a little 'godly' aura. According to the legends, the phoenix should be similar. Aside from these, there were probably others as well but the ones that Qing Shui had the most opinions on were the dragons and phoenix.

These might not be accurate either. The dragon in Qing Shui's memory existed in a desolate era. Even in the ancient times, they were the mounts of deities.

Thus, all of these were just guesses. Qing Shui now felt that everything was possible. If Qing Shui was told that deities existed in this world, Qing Shui might believe it.

Standing on the seashore that was not considered big, he felt a little angry now that he had arrived here. This was because he could see many turtles. Perhaps the creatures that were on the bottom of the food chain were not afraid of this Golden Jiao.

Since they were able to scare away the Golden Jiao, Qing Shui felt assured. Finding a good position, he took out the Pure Gold Fishing Rod. He had not gone fishing for a long time.

Qing Shui felt that the quality of the water here was very good, plus it was rich in Spiritual Qi. Thus, he felt that there must be something that was filled with spirituality. Even if he could not catch anything good, it didn't matter. He would just consider it taking some time to relax. After all, he had already gained a lot from traveling in the Sky Penetrating Mountains.

Qing Shui, who was not expecting anything, actually managed to hook something the moment he cast the Pure Gold Fishing Rod into the water. He immediately pulled it up. He felt that this fishing trip would result in many fish, prawns, crabs, and turtles.

When Qing Shui pulled up the rod, he found a stalk of grass, a water plant, Golden Snake Grass!

Qing Shui did not expect that he would be able to obtain Golden Snake Grass here. Looks like this body of water was filled with spirituality. He looked at the herb in his hands and felt very satisfied.

This herb was incredibly valuable but only played a supporting role. It would not increase any medicinal properties. However, it was something that every alchemist would seek. This was because when a stalk of this was added, the refining of that pill would be 100% successful.

It was a heaven-defying supporting herb. The success rate of refining medicine was very low in the World of the Nine Continents. However, with the Golden Snake Grass, it would be a definite success.

For example, an important medicinal pill might require many precious and rare herbs. If the refining failed, all the herbs would be gone. At that moment, one would realize the preciousness of the Golden Snake Grass.

It was even more precious than those precious herbs. This was because it could bring out the most optimal use of those herbs. Or else, those precious herbs would end up being wasted.

Thus, even though it was not considered a miraculous treasure, it was more valuable than those miraculous herbs.

The Golden Snake Grass grew in the water, so Qing Shui threw it into the pond in the Realm of the Violet Jade Immortal. He had never expected to have such a good beginning. He had received a good harvest on this trip to Sky Penetrating Mountains.

Although Qing Shui was very confident in his ability to refine medicine, it was not at a 100% chance. Just like the Ren Meridian Strengthening Pellet and Du Meridian Strengthening Pellet.

The herbs needed for these two pills were especially precious. If he failed, Qing Shui might cry till his tears ran dry. He had three Sky Penetrating Grass, thus Qing Shui could afford to fail once. As

he had great confidence in his ability to refine medicine, if he failed once, Qing Shui was still quite confident in refining the Ren Meridian Strengthening Pellet and Du Meridian Strengthening Pellet.

However, now with this Golden Snake Grass, refining those two pills was now something set in stone. After this, Qing Shui continued to fish, he hoped to be able to obtain more Golden Snake Grass. With this, he could either keep it for his own use or exchange it for something good.

After the time it takes for half a stick of incense to burn, the rod moved again. Qing Shui paused for a breath of time before pulling the rod up. When he saw it, he was stunned. There was a herb that was looked almost exactly same as the Golden Snake Grass but it was silver in color.

Silver Snake Grass!

It had a similar effect to the Golden Snake Grass but it was not a 100% percent success. Instead, it increased the success rate by 50%. Although its value was much less than the Golden Snake Grass, it was still a very valuable item. After all, it was not easy to find either, thus the number people able to use it weren't many.

The rarer the item, the greater its value!

To others, an increase of 50% success rate would not result in a 100% success rate. However, it was different for Qing Shui. When using this Silver Snake Grass, Qing Shui was confident that he

could achieve a 100% success rate.

It seems like this body of water was a huge treasure trove. Qing Shui actually managed to obtain two very valuable herbs. Although that Golden Jiao ran away, his gains were not inferior to that of killing the Golden Jiao.

Qing Shui cast the rod in for the third time, his mood was incomparably peaceful. This time, he was not too greedy for anything. Although he loved having good stuff, he knew that these matters could not be forced.

He caught a turtle on his third cast but he released it.

His fourth cast caught an ordinary fish.

His fifth cast was the same.

...

Qing Shui did not feel any dissatisfaction, he felt peaceful. With his current mental state, he felt that fishing was an enjoyable experience. Time slowly went by, he intended to catch one more thing before sleeping.

This time, he fished up an Interspatial Silk Sachet.

Interspatial Silk Sachet!

Qing Shui was astonished as he held this unimpressive Interspatial Silk Sachet in his hands. This kind of item would not change even after a long period of time. However, the Interspatial Silk Sachet was weak to flames.

Qing Shui held the Interspatial Silk Sachet feeling curious but he was not anxious to open it. Instead, he brought the Five-Headed Demonic Spider away from this area. He intends to stay here for a few more days to fish and refine the Ren Meridian Strengthening Pellet and Du Meridian Strengthening Pellet.

After he entered the Realm of the Violet Jade Immortal at night, he decided to bring in the Five-Headed Demonic Spider as well after thinking for awhile. He originally intended to leave it outside to watch for the movement of the Golden Jiao. However, in the end, he felt worried about doing that.

Although when the Golden Jiao saw the Five-Headed Demonic Spider, it would be frightened away, he was still worried. Right now, that Golden Jiao was no longer important to Qing Shui. Thus he did not have to put the Five-Headed Demonic Spider at risk.

After entering the Realm of the Violet Jade Immortal, he circulated the Ancient Strengthening Technique for a cycle, raising his state to its peak before starting to refine the pills.

Taking out the Golden Flint Iron Cauldron, Qing Shui first threw in a few herbs that were refined already.

Then, he prepared the other things as well. He refined the Golden Snake Grass and placed it to the side.

Qing Shui was very confident in himself but he was still prepared to use the Golden Snake Grass. This was because he could not make any mistakes.

During this time, Qing Shui's spiritual sense and spirit energy were much stronger than before. When he refined the Ren Meridian Strengthening Pellet, he realized that any increase of spirit energy would result in an increase in his refining abilities.

He expanded his spiritual sense!

He then proceeded in an orderly manner. It was slow but smooth.

There was a bubbling sound coming from the Golden Flint Iron Cauldron. There was a layer of Emperor's Qi in the Golden Flint Iron Cauldron that did not disperse.

He needed to wait for two hours before throwing in each pre-refined herb. The Ren Meridian Strengthening Pellet required tens of herbs. A conservative estimate of the amount of time he needed was seven days.

.....

It was nine days later before Qing Shui finally added the last herb. He had added the Golden Snake Grass long ago. Although the

Golden Snake Grass could guarantee a 100% success rate, he still had to follow the normal process of alchemy. If someone who was not an alchemist blindly attempted this, it would fail.

“Ding!”

It was in the last 15 mins of the ninth day when Qing Shui heard that familiar ‘ding’ that comforted him. This melodious sound meant that it had succeeded.

Even though he knew that it would succeed, he was still incomparably happy.

Qing Shui did not even bother to take a look at that Ren Meridian Strengthening Pellet and went to his bed and rested. He was too tired, he had spent nine days in a state of high concentration. Even with his strong cultivation, he still felt very tired.

Eight hours later, Qing Shui woke up. Regardless of how tired he was, Qing Shui would normally wake up after eight hours. After he woke up, he made some fish porridge and drank two bowls of it. He left some behind so he could heat it up later and eat it.

After that, Qing Shui eagerly walked towards that Golden Flint Iron Cauldron. After he opened it, he saw a violet colored pill about the size of a walnut. He knew long ago that there would only be one pill but he still hoped to see two or three pills.

He checked out the effects of the Ren Meridian Strengthening

Pellet: Increase of the body's abilities from 50% to 100%. Depended on the absorption ability of the consumer. Will open the Tiantu acupoint.

.....

After thinking for a long time, he stored this precious Ren Meridian Strengthening Pellet in a porcelain bottle. He breathed in relief. After that, Qing Shui was not anxious to refine the Du Meridian Strengthening Pellet.

He wanted to spend the next few days fishing, to see if he could obtain more Golden Snake Grass. Without a 100% guarantee, he did not want to make any careless moves.

Suddenly, he remembered that Interspatial Silk Sachet he acquired fishing the last time. Now that he had nothing to do, Qing Shui wanted to check it out. After all, it was obvious that this Interspatial Silk Sachet had belonged to a human.

Taking out the Interspatial Silk Sachet, Qing Shui scanned it with his spiritual sense first before looking inside of it. At this instant, Qing Shui only had this thought, I earned big...really big...

The first thing he saw was tens of stalks of Golden Snake Grass. This caused Qing Shui to feel like he had earned big time.

There also seemed to be even more Silver Snake Grass in there than Golden Snake Grass. Although the space in this Interspatial

Silk Sachet was not big, it was filled with many precious items. Aside from the earlier mentioned items, there were many other herbs.

This caused Qing Shui to feel puzzled. Practically everything in the Interspatial Silk Sachet was herbs. Furthermore, they were precious herbs. This unexpected gain caused Qing Shui to think.

The owner of this Interspatial Silk Sachet was definitely an alchemist. He probably had found the Golden Snake Grass and Silver Snake Grass and stayed to look for more herbs.

Before finally dying at the claws of the Golden Jiao. This was Qing Shui's guess. However, this should be quite accurate or at least quite close to the truth. After all, if a person easily found a Golden Snake Grass here and then managed to find another one within a short amount of time...

He might have stayed here to continue picking herbs. There would not be a lot of people who could control their greed after that. Maybe the Golden Jiao was not here then and had gone out, when it came back, it resulted in the death of this alchemist.

Qing Shui continued to search in the Interspatial Silk Sachet. Suddenly, he saw a piece of beast parchment in the corner. He felt excited because it was likely to be an alchemic recipe.

AST 893 – Golden Snake Pellet Recipe, The Success Of Du Meridian Strengthening Pellet, Swallowing The Pellets

“An alchemy recipe?”

It had been a very long time since Qing Shui had last gotten a new alchemy recipe. Although the next alchemy recipe, ‘Violet Qi Pellet’, had also appeared once, he still thought that his alchemy recipes were scarce.

He quickly took out the Beast Parchment. Three words greeted his eyes as soon as he unfolded it – Golden Snake Pellet!

Qing Shui quickly took a look at the recipe. The first medicinal plant needed was the Golden Snake Grass. As he continued to read the recipe, he discovered that all the medicinal herbs listed were already fully available in that Interspatial Silk Sachet.

Qing Shui was now certain that the owner of this Interspatial Silk Sachet was definitely an alchemist. Additionally, he was not just an ordinary alchemist, but a rather powerful one. It was a pity. He probably didn’t think he would die here.

Qing Shui looked at the effects of the Golden Snake Pellet. The Golden Snake Pellet allowed one to successfully break through to the next grade. For example, a Grade One Martial King would become a Grade Two Martial King and a Grade One Martial Saint will become a Grade Two Martial Saint. This pill was only effective

for grades below Martial Emperor. Only one pellet could be consumed per year. This pill can be consumed by both demonic beasts and humans.

After reading for awhile, Qing Shui discovered that this pill was no longer useful to him even though this medicinal pill was really not bad. He didn't know how many of these Golden Snake Pellet could be concocted in one go. If only one pellet could be concocted from one Golden Snake Grass, then he might as well forget about it. It really wasn't worth it.

Qing Shui put down the Golden Snake Pellet recipe along with the Interspatial Silk Sachet once again. He had gained a few more Golden Snake Grasses now. He was initially planning to fish a little for these few days. Maybe he would be able to fish up more Golden Snake Grasses. That way, he would be able to concoct the Du Meridian Strengthening Pellet immediately.

It seemed like the heavens were really helping him now. So after he took a break, Qing Shui started to concoct the Du Meridian Strengthening Pellet. There was nothing to wait for, now that he had a 100% success rate.

The Du Meridian Strengthening Pellet was in no way inferior to the Ren Meridian Strengthening Pellet. The only differences were the sequence and the main ingredient, so the concoction went exceptionally smooth.

In addition to the Golden Snake Grass, there basically wasn't any pressure. The concoction succeeded very soon. Looking at the violet colored medicinal pellet, people who lacked knowledge

would definitely think that it was a Ren Meridian Strengthening Pellet.

He took a look at the effects of the Du Meridian Strengthening Pellet. The effects were the same too.

Du Meridian Strengthening Pellet: Increases spirit energy and spirit energy control by 5% to 10%, depending on each individual's body absorption. Consuming both the Ren Meridian and Du Meridian Strengthening Pellets at the same time will yield unexpected effects.

The Ren Meridian Strengthening Pellet had the additional effect of clearing the Tiantu acupoint while raising strength. However, the Du Meridian Strengthening Pellet would only increase spirit energy and spiritual offense.

Even so, Qing Shui still placed all of his hope on that last bit about consuming both of them at the same time. Unexpected effects, he wondered what those could be.

The Ren and Du Meridians were the two most important meridians in the human body. They were also known as the Heaven and Earth Meridians. If Heaven and Earth blended together and Yin and Yang were also harmonized in his body, Qing Shui had a hunch that it would definitely cause a tremendous change.

Perhaps if he consumed these two pills at the same time, he would gain the opportunity to break through to the Seventh

Heavenly Layer. Qing Shui suppressed the excitement in his heart as he placed the Du Meridian Strengthening Pellet into a porcelain bottle.

Both the Ren Meridian and Du Meridian Strengthening Pellets had been successfully concocted. He would consume them when he returned to the Deity Cave of Immortal. Hopefully he would be able to successfully breakthrough this time around. That way, he would truly gain a foothold in the World of the Nine Continents.

The Violet Qi Pellet came out at once too. Its experience was still stuck at one million points, he realized that accumulating experience now seemed to be way more difficult than before.

He didn't know what effect this Violet Qi Pellet would have either. It was better for him to rest his body and mind for a few days. By the time his body reached its peak condition, he would be able to consume the Ren Meridian Strengthening Pellet and the Du Meridian Strengthening Pellet.

The next day, Qing Shui practiced his Taichi Fist and Back Connecting Fist on the beach. The Back Connecting Fist always reminded him of that Long-armed Vicious Monkey King. Although he had only seen a single punch from that gigantic Vicious Monkey King, he knew that its punch was at a much higher realm than his Back Connecting Fist. The Howling Moon Silver Ape in that temple that he had seen a long time ago simply couldn't be compared to this Long-armed Vicious Monkey King.

That Golden Jiao never appeared again after going into the water. Qing Shui didn't spend any more effort on it for now either.

He was prepared to leave in two days.

He wasn't going to cultivate nor refine demons right now. He was just going to practice his Taichi Fist at most. He did the same too when he was in the Realm of Violet Jade Immortal. He'd just walk around to nourish his heart and calm his mind.

During day time he would fish. Sometimes things were just this odd. It was easier to achieve something when one wasn't adamant about it. On the contrary, one wouldn't be able to achieve what they desired no matter how hard they tried when they were adamant about it. This kind of phenomenon was difficult to explain with words.

After obtaining that Interspatial Silk Sachet, Qing Shui was no longer obsessed with getting his hands on the Golden Snake Grass. Nonetheless, he was still able to get five of them in just these two days.....

This made Qing Shui feel a little incredulous. He then planted all the Golden Snake Grasses he found into the water.

Two days passed by a flash, yet these two days still felt quite slow to Qing Shui. That Golden Jiao still hadn't appeared in the past two days. Qing Shui didn't have any intentions of taking a look at the bottom of this inner sea either.

The most important thing now was to consume the Ren Meridian Strengthening Pellet and the Du Meridian Strengthening Pellet.

Qing Shui made his way towards the Deity Cave of Immortal along with the Five-Headed Demonic Spider. He could quickly cover 10,000 li without even using the Nine Continents Steps. After all, he had the Five-Headed Demonic Spider beside him. With nothing to worry about, he was able to return to the 100,000 li zone in just a little more than a day.

The outward journey and the return journey felt entirely different. In just a short amount of time, he was able to arrive at that Deity Cave of Immortal by noon.

The Deity Cave of Immortal was usually quite concealed, unless they had been discovered by someone. Just like that Deity Cave of Immortal in the Wolf Fang City, it had pretty much become a well-known place by now.

The entrance to this Deity Cave of Immortal remained as concealed as usual. He had killed a few Violent Blood Bears here before. He discovered that it was very peaceful and quiet here this time. There were only a few small beasts after he entered but they would flee quickly.

Even though the inner hall was underground and should have been very dark, there were still some light stones and luminous pearls so it wasn't dark at all here. On top of that, light also seeped through the cave entrance.

The Five-Headed Demonic Spider was left outside the great hall. With it around here, Qing Shui wasn't worried about any demonic beasts coming to bother him. He sat cross-legged at the inner hall entrance and started to slowly activate the Ancient Strengthening

Technique.

Qing Shui only stood up after about two hours. He took out the Ren Meridian Strengthening Pellet and the Du Meridian Strengthening Pellet before quickly consuming them. It wasn't like the two had to be consumed at precisely the same time. As long as they were both consumed within the same 15 minute, it could be considered as consuming at the same time.

Qing Shui was gambling this time. He was aware that consuming two pellets at the same time would definitely be very dangerous. This was why he had used a period of time to rest his body up and only decided to consume the pills once his body had recovered to its peak condition.

Besides, this was the Deity Cave of Immortal. When strong medicinal pellets were consumed here, the body could resist the potency of the medicinal pellets with the help of the cave's powerful suppression. This would also aid the absorption process a little.

As soon as the two medicinal pellets were swallowed, a wave of heat and a refreshing sensation simultaneously rose up. Each sensation coursed along their respective meridians. Its speed was slow yet vigorous.

Qing Shui didn't dare to be slow as well. He stood there as he activated the Ancient Strengthening Technique. Rather than trying to deliberately absorb that wave of energy, he used the Ancient Strengthening Technique to further strengthen his meridians. But then again, every small cycle of the Ancient

Strengthening Technique would absorb some of that energy.

The two waves of energies became increasingly strong. He was being fully imbued by that violent energy to the brim. Other than that, the waves of refreshing sensations had directly flowed to the 'Niwan Palace' that was deep in his sea of consciousness. Even that mysterious Yin-Yang Image was glowing with a magnificent radiance. Although it was glowing magnificently, the color was still dull and simple.

The energy within his body was growing stronger. Qing Shui unconsciously took a step forward, using the suppression of the Deity Cave of Immortal to resist that powerful surging energy.

One would still need to ensure that their meridians were powerful and tough enough before utilizing the Deity Cave of Immortal's suppression. Otherwise, they would still explode. Qing Shui was quite confident about the toughness of his own meridians but he still didn't dare to be reckless.

Nature Energy activated automatically, allowing Qing Shui's body to behave as if it had an air vent. This was one of the effects that could be achieved when Grade Six Nature Energy was activated. It was now playing a very useful role. For instance, if a person was trapped in an airtight cell, he wouldn't suffocate in there if a hole about the size of a pea was made.

If a huge balloon had a tiny pinhole in it, then you wouldn't be able to blow it until it exploded!

That was like a type of diversion, yet it was different. This was because Nature Energy was the purest energy between the Heaven and Earth. With Nature Energy, some impure Qi could be condensed, refined and transformed into essence. The useless parts would then be expelled. That way, more space could be made available in the meridians and the Dantian.

Grade Six Nature Energy was quite powerful after all, it was able to actually stabilize his body almost immediately. Qing Shui sensed that the violet energy in his body was still increasing. He was happy yet anxious at the same time.

The increase was simply too rapid. This made Qing Shui worried. Would he really die from his body exploding? The Heavenly Dan of his Upper Dantian was also rapidly circulating right now. The golden brilliance shone at the meridians in the surroundings.

Qing Shui's skeleton turned into a faint golden color at this very moment. Qing Shui foot moved a step forward. His face was already crimson.

.....

The energy within his body was still increasing violently. Qing Shui was already all the way in the middle of the hall. His body was already at its limit.

It would be a complete lie if he said he wasn't worried. Qing Shui clenched his teeth as he once again helplessly took another step forward!

Pu!

A wave of crimson Qi force exploded from his left shoulder. Only his clothes stopped the blood from splattering all over the place. Qing Shui had no choice but to divert his Qi force to preserve the overall situation by shifting the damage to only one part of his body.

He circulated the Ancient Strengthening Technique with even more vigor. Every small cycle would let the Qi force in his body dissipate a little, yet it was increasing even more.

Just when Qing Shui wanted to use the same method again, a loud and clear noise rang out from his Upper Dantian area. This shock very quickly turned into exultation.

It turned out that the Grade Five Upper Dantian that never had any activity had broken through at this very moment. The violent energy within his body rushed towards his Upper Dantian like waves.

Qing Shui was dazed. His Grade Six Upper Dantian had experienced some qualitative changes. Although it wasn't as powerful as the Dantian in his abdomen, it finally looked like a real Dantian now. That golden pearl had dissolved and it was the factor that allowed for the Upper Dantian to become stronger.

All of a sudden, Qing Shui's body felt extremely relaxed. Even so, he didn't dare to slack off because the violent energy was still

increasing in his body. The Nature Energy was also circulating rapidly.

AST 894 – Seventh Heavenly Layer, Solidifying The Dantian, Forming Pellet, The Carp Leaping Over Longmen To Become A Dragon

The scorching aura and the cooling aura continued to increase in his body without any changes. At this moment, Qing Shui could only smile bitterly, hoping that he would be able to get through this stage successfully. Every day there would be people in the world of the nine continents who would die from their bodies exploding due to there being too much energy in their bodies. This was the result of human's greed.

Very quickly, his Dantian was filled up with powerful energy and the energy in his meridian channels continued to increase. Qing Shui continued to walk on.

The earlier spot on his shoulder had recovered due to his powerful self-recuperating skills but other parts of his body continued to be torn through. However, at this moment, Qing Shui's brain was especially clear.

And in his body, slight changes continued to happen non-stop. His Upper and Lower Dantian continued to comprehend the changes, blocking the huge energy for Qing Shui.

If not for the fact that his Dantian had undergone a change earlier, Qing Shui wouldn't know what would have happened. At least, his progress would have been delayed by a lot.

Pa!

An area of his bones cracked and the immense pain made Qing Shui clench his teeth to hang on. The process of breaking through was not only dangerous but painful as well. That unbearable torture made some people feel as if they would rather not go through any breakthroughs.

Such a forceful method to borrow the powers of external objects to attain a breakthrough was painful. If it was a natural flow whereby the powers gradually increase and overflows, there wouldn't be any pain to the breakthrough. One might even feel that it was comfortable.

However, not many people were able to go through such a natural breakthrough process. Most people would usually need to rely on external items to force the breakthrough. In the earlier stages, most people could naturally obtain a breakthrough in the earlier stages but even if they were to forcefully push the breakthrough, it wouldn't be as painful since the level was low.

Qing Shui circulated his Focused Concentration to its peak, not only to increase his abilities but also to primarily control the powers in his body to the finest detail.

Pfft!

Finally, Qing Shui couldn't hold it in anymore and spat out a mouthful of fresh blood. His internal organs had already been

injured by the powerful essence and now, his entire body was an enormous barrel of energy. If he was not careful, he might just explode into pieces.

Suddenly, just as Qing Shui was feeling that all hope was lost, suddenly a tremendous change once again occurred to his Dantian!

Liquefy!

His Upper Dantian which has just leveled up was actually starting to liquefy. Some liquid state appeared in it and the energy in his body once again gushed into the Upper Dantian, forcing it to continue on with the changes.

Qing Shui heaved a sigh of relief for now. However, at the same time, he was also puzzled. When his Upper Dantian was formed initially, it was a golden colored pearl. Back then, that was just opening up the Central Palace. It was not the real Upper Dantian.

However, to think that once the Heavenly Dan broke through to the sixth level, under the tremendous energy, the golden pearl would dissolve and become the real Upper Dantian, just like the Lower Dantian.

It was only now that Qing Shui was considered to have two Dantians, two real Dantians.

To cultivators, Dantians were like a storage medium. How strong a person was and how much power could be unleashed were more

or less directly related to one's Dantian. If one didn't have any Dantian, the person would be the same as ordinary people and could only cultivate the crudest physical training techniques, unleashing physical prowess. In fact, cultivators who really trained up their bodies also required powerful Dantians and meridian channels.

Once a person's Dantian was destroyed, the person would become a cripple, robbed of all his skills. However, a cultivator's Dantian was not so easily crippled. It would not be crippled from just one hit. In fact, one's Dantian was even "sturdier" than the other organs.

Now that Qing Shui had two Dantians, his abilities had increased to become twice as much as before. Moreover, his abilities were still increasing...

He was even hoping to let this maniacal growth stop. He felt that the chances of him breaking through to the Seventh Heavenly Layer were very small while the chances of his body exploding and him dying were much higher.

Although Qing Shui craved to reach the Seventh Heavenly Layer, he was now pushed to his wits end by that horrifying power. This time around, if he couldn't attain a breakthrough, he could only die.

His greed was all to blame, hoping to get a surprising takeaway by taking two together. He was too greedy. It might have been much better if he were to take it one by one...

In that moment, many thoughts flashed past Qing Shui's mind. It was only while his Upper Dantian was still crazily absorbing the tremendous power that he could have the luxury of thinking about something else.

He thought of his mother. He had not seen her for a very long time. The woman who had given birth to him and raised him up was the closest person to him in the World of the Nine Continents. If he were to die, he didn't know what would become of his mother.

And then there were his women and kids. Something surged in Qing Shui's body while the Qi from the Ancient Book of "Rebirth" also started to circulate automatically.

In that moment, Qing Shui sensed that his meridian channels seemed to have strengthened many times and even his Dantians seemed to have swelled up to be multiple times bigger. He closed his eyes slightly and with an intense thought, released a hint of powerful battle intent.

Time passed by slowly and the powerful energy once again filled up Qing Shui's entire body. Qing Shui clenched his teeth and forced himself to bear with the weight of the tremendous energy. Even his spirit energy also blatantly dashed toward the Niwan Palace in his consciousness.

Very quickly, Qing Shui was covered in injuries once again. Right now, it was as if he was walking on a tightrope, in a critical

situation and could possibly turn into ash at any moment.

However, Qing Shui continued to give it his all and he no longer cared if he could attain a breakthrough. He completely scattered his focus, as if he was sending out his spirit energy to every part of his body.

Gradually, Qing Shui started to forget about himself, forget what he was doing.

Suddenly, Qing Shui's body twisted. If he were to open his eyes, he would definitely give himself a big scare since his body had almost exploded at that moment.

And it was also at that moment that the huge Golden Buddha Image appeared behind Qing Shui, releasing a magnificent golden light, encompassing Qing Shui.

Pfft!

An indescribably crisp sound rang out. It was a comfortable sound that was accompanied by echoes. A circle of brilliant glow appeared around Qing Shui.

At that moment, his entire body seemed to have exploded and a hint of black aura appeared in the area. It was at this time that Qing Shui abruptly opened his eyes, appearing extremely deep and strange, as if he had demonic power.

He clothes simply exploded, leaving only the Nine Continent Boots completely intact. However, Qing Shui didn't seem to have noticed it and was at a loss from the tremendous surprise.

In that moment earlier, Qing Shui had woken up completely. He just happened to witness the moment the Upper and Lower Dantians merged together, as if the heavens and earth had merged together.

In that moment, he felt that his entire body had gone through a tremendous change, as if his entire body was reborn, strengthening limitlessly at a rate that could be seen by the naked eye... All the mix of power in the Upper Dantian gushed out toward the Lower Dantian.

Solidifying!

Forming a pellet!

Right now there was a glowing bright golden pellet in Qing Shui's Dantian, the size of a walnut. It was exuding the purest gold light and was gradually spinning. Qing Shui was overjoyed to sense the powers it contained.

Now, Qing Shui could be sure that he had attained a breakthrough to the Seventh Heavenly Layer. When he was at the First to Third Heavenly Layer, his Dantian was in a gaseous state and when he was at the Fourth to the Sixth Heavenly Layer, it was in a liquid state.

When he broke through from the Third Heavenly Layer to the Fourth Heavenly Layer, his Dantian had liquefied. It was the change from the elementary to the intermediate phase and right now, it was moving from the intermediate to the expert phase.

Solidifying was one of the most obvious traits.

Forming a pellet... Although Qing Shui had thought about it before, he was still very astonished to see it happen. The Upper Dantian didn't form a pellet and was still in a liquid state.

It took only a short period of time to cross the breakthrough, but to Qing Shui it was as if he was reborn into a completely new person or that he had just lived for millions of years.

This was a feeling and a change to one's realm. Now, he learnt many things by himself without a teacher and he had even understood things he had never been able to understand previously. Even his vision seemed to be wider now.

After lowering his head and realizing that he was naked, he quickly entered the Realm of the Violet Jade Immortal and changed into a fresh set of clothes. To think that the Lunar Silk Garment was destroyed...

This made Qing Shui fall into a short daze. That was given to him by the Heavenly Palace's Old Ancestor and he felt a little unwilling to part with it but it was now destroyed...

In order to ascertain if he had really attained a breakthrough, Qing Shui circulated the Ancient Strengthening Technique and realized that the barrier which he had been stuck at was now gone. He also sensed his abilities now and was very sure that he had attained a breakthrough.

It might be because he now had an Upper Dantian, his abilities were now above his expectations. Having attained a breakthrough to the Seventh Heavenly Layer allowed his physical strength to reach a strength of 40 stars...

For a very long time, Qing Shui was full of disbelief over this number. However, the powers in his body told him that everything was real. Moreover, both his attacks and defenses were also both at 40 stars.

His physical strength was at 40 stars... As expected of the expert phase of the Ancient Strengthening Technique. The Seventh Heavenly Layer was a critical phase where the Dantian would solidify and form a pellet.

Although he knew that he would get an increase of at least ten to twenty times stronger than he was before, after attaining the breakthrough to the Seventh Heavenly Layer, it had increased by 40 times! Qing Shui was very satisfied with this result.

He thought of his Upper Dantian. This time around, it had really played a huge role. Moreover, the reason his abilities could increase by this much might be closely related to the breakthrough he had in his Dantian.

To have a physical strength of 40 stars... After enhanced by the Diamond Qi, Diamond Protection and Diamond Crossing Rivers, his abilities would reach 80 stars. Now all of these, including the Nature Energy, were all circulating automatically.

Grade Six Nature Energy!

Now, under normal situations, Qing Shui's strength would reach 104 stars!

The Unmoving Like A Mountain increased his physical strength by 50%, the Frenzied Bull's Strength increased it by 30%, the Heavenly Thunder Slash increased power by 30%, the Shield attack increased power by 20%, the Heavenly Thunder Slash increased power and defence by 50%, the Combination Sword Technique enhanced power by 40% and the Thunder God increased overall abilities to be two times stronger.

Taking all these into consideration, even without any weapons, Qing Shui's abilities were at a strength of 192 stars. He could perform the Combination Sword Technique using his hand as a sword and if he were to solely hold onto the Thunder God, he would be able to attack with a strength of close to 400 stars.

This was about the current level of the Five-Headed Demonic Spider.

If he were to add on the Big Dipper Sword, he could attack with a strength of over 400 stars. After attaining a breakthrough, Qing

Shui could now sense the Five-Headed Demonic Spider's abilities very clearly. It was now not as unfathomable as before.

Qing Shui's moved his body slowly. He wanted to get used to the explosive increase in his body's powers. After such a tremendous breakthrough, he could not accurately use his powers. There was a need for some time to familiarize himself with this newfound power.

Back Connecting Fist!

The powers in Qing Shui's body were extremely raging and he needed to release them. He started performing the Back Connecting Fist in the empty space in the Realm of the Violet Jade Immortal.

Force Thrusting Back Connection!

With this attack, a layer of tremors appeared on his fist. Fist Dipper. Qing Shui's blood was boiling. The powers from that punch gave him an indescribable agitation. This was great power. This felt too good.

It was like his own kid. If he were to close his eyes, he seemed to be able to think of it as a young lass, just like Luan Luan and Yuchang or like Qin Yin and Qing Yan.

AST 895 – Formation Unlocked, Nine Palace Steps

Qing Shui spent one whole day practicing. After his abilities had increased tremendously, he was unable to hold it in. It was as if he had found something he liked a lot and could not bear to part with. It was as if he was scared that if he were to stop practicing, it would disappear.

Now, his worries for personal gains or losses were especially strong. He felt that if he did not stabilize it, it would disappear.

Right now, Qing Shui was acting just like he had gotten his hands on an interesting toy, clutching it tightly, for fear that it would be snatched away if he were to loosen his grip.

Taichi Fist!

After his abilities improved, all the battle techniques underwent a huge improvement. Battle techniques were means, while a person's abilities were his "powers". Only when one had become powerful, would he then be able to unleash the greatest prowess of these battle techniques. Otherwise, the battle techniques would just be an act.

The transformation into the Seventh Layer was like a breaking through of a cocoon to become a butterfly or the transformation of a Jiao into a dragon or even like the act of drawing eyes on the painting of a dragon. It was a leap into the sky, the act of the carp leaping over Longmen to become a dragon.

Thousand Hammer Technique!

Hidden Weapon!

Sword of Sixth Wave!

...

Qing Shui gradually came to a stop only after having performed all of his battle techniques. At this moment, he was feeling immense joy, not knowing how to express it. He suddenly felt like looking for someone to share his joy.

When his abilities increased, so did his spirit energy. Entering his consciousness, he now saw the of the Yin-Yang Image being about two times as big as before. He thought of how it was only the size of a date in the beginning but was now the size of a bowl.

Niwan Palace !

When Qing Shui saw his Niwan Palace, he was astonished. To think that there was also a golden pearl the size of a bean in the Niwan Palace. Although it was small, it was emitting a brilliant glow and the spirit energy it contained surprised Qing Shui.

There was also a qualitative change to his consciousness. Qing Shui could now sense that his spirit energy had increased by many

times compared to before.

Before he attained this breakthrough, he had hoped that he could reach the Grand Perfection Stage for the Heart of Roc, for his spirit energy to be increased to ten times stronger. With that, the prowess of his primordial flame balls would also be increased to be ten times stronger.

Now that he was at the Seventh Heavenly Layer and the spirit energy he had increased to about forty times stronger... Before this breakthrough, even if his Heart of Roc had reached the Grand Perfection Stage, it would be far from comparable. This was a qualitative change.

This was a huge leap in his abilities and the benefits this breakthrough brought had exceeded Qing Shui's expectations. He had initially thought that the limits would be at 20 times stronger, or just slightly more. He had not expected it to be 40 times stronger. The Upper Dantian was a great contributing factor to this.

Unknowingly, he started to submerge in the cycle of training, eating and sleeping. Very quickly, one week passed by. Thankfully Qing Shui had great control over his powers. If not for the fact that this increase was too fast, he had no need to spend such a long time to familiarize himself with his newly found power. It was good that his spiritual sense was very powerful and the speed at which he familiarized with the powers in his body was very rapid. However, despite this, it took him a week to familiarize himself with it all.

In this breakthrough, Qing Shui's height unknowingly grew by an inch. His slender body was very well-proportioned, his muscles not extremely bulging but that sturdiness was like steel.

When he calmed down, Qing Shui suddenly recalled that the Ancient Strengthening Technique had awakened some skill within him. Thinking of this, he suddenly looked towards the depth of his consciousness agitatedly.

The formation has lit up!

Qing Shui was very agitated. After having seen the Sky Prison Sect's formation, he had been very interested in formations. He took a look and only found the formation lit up. It had appeared before his breakthrough but it was only now that he could start learning it.

There were many words below the formation. Qing Shui read on and saw that the first introduction was about the Eight Trigrams Orientation.

The Eight Trigrams Orientation refers to Qian, Kun, Li, Kan, Zhen, Xun, Gen, Dui.

Qian: represents the bottom right, the northwest, the right leg, right foot, the large intestine, the head and others. Kun: represents the top right, the southwest, the right shoulder, right arm, the spleen, the stomach and others. Li: represents upward, south, the head, the heart, the eye and others. Kan: represents bottom, the perineum, the kidney, the ear and others... Dui: refers to right,

west, right ribs, right arm, mouth, lungs and others.

The Eight Trigrams Orientation not only relates to the directions between heaven and earth but there were even representative spots on a human body. The world started off in a state of chaos before it gradually split into two, which was Yin and Yang respectively. It then further diverged into variations from the initial state into interleading states of four and then further diverging to form the eight trigrams. The eight trigrams would continue to combine with each other, forming 64 combinations.

Qing Shui could still be considered to understand this quite well and he merely glanced through the descriptions of the acupuncture points and would only stop to read through in detail those which he had not come across before.

Nine Palace Steps!

When Qing Shui said this, his heart throbbed and he quickly went to take a look.

The power of the formation was closely related to the people who formed the formation. The people who were moving within the formations must have the abilities to advance and retreat with ease. The Nine Palace Steps were extremely profound and could let the people who set up the formation move around freely in the formation, borrowing the powers of the Heavens and Earth.

The Nine Palace Steps was a footwork that was created from the basis of the Eight Trigrams Orientation. It had a powerful

damaging prowess when the users were escaping and going against their enemies, being able to unleash the strongest battle prowess in just a slight movement.

Next was the technique for the Nine Palace Steps. Everything in the Nine Palace Steps was related to the Eight Trigrams Orientation and with the amazing footwork, the user could gain great advantages in terms of speed and positioning, unleashing the greatest prowess they could.

Qing Shui started to learn the Nine Palace Steps. He had a strong level of mastery in the area of footwork and the Eight Trigrams Orientation and thus picked it up very quickly.

Qing Shui only scanned through it and didn't try to put in too much effort to pick it up. He was just intending to take a glance through everything and check out what amazing stuff was there.

After the Nine Palace Steps, there were some formations. However, there were not many of them. The first one was the Singularity Bane.

Singularity Bane allowed the users to tap on simple setups to kill enemies by relying on the Nine Palace Steps and the “positionings” in the surroundings. This was not really considered a formation but had some traits of a formation and primarily relied on the Nine Palace Steps' profoundness.

Duality Minutest Formation, Five Elements Minor Formation, Five Elements Major Formation, Twelve Celestials and Demons

Formation, Spirit Gathering Formation, Spirit Sealing Minor Formation, Great Heavenly Stars Cycle Formation, Bei Ming Hidden Killing Formation, Godly Dayan Formation, Great Cosmic Formation, Amoghasiddhi Formation, Five Demons Pestilence Sword Formation, Eight Trigrams Formation, Five Elements Eight Trigrams Formation, Nine Palace Eight Trigrams Formation, Four Perfections Formation, Twelve Heavenly Gates Formation, Ten Paramitas Formation, Immortal Vanquishing Formation, Five Elements Spirit Sealing Formation, Five Elements Yin-Yang Great Reversal Formation, Big Dipper Formation, God Slaying Devil Devouring Formation...

Qing Shui almost looked through all the formations in one glance, but most of them were greyed out and he could only cultivate a few of them. Some of these formations were very familiar to him, while others were not. However, just by looking at their names, he felt that they seemed very powerful.

He even saw the “God Slaying Devil Devouring Formation” and “Immortal Vanquishing Formation”. These names sounded very much like a bluff but Qing Shui could not be bothered with that. He could finally pick up formations and would naturally not let go of this chance. Qing Clan might be able to become powerful through formations.

Seeing that he still had some time, Qing Shui decided to first check out the few formations he could cultivate. There were only five of them.

Duality Minutest Formation, Five Elements Minor Formation, Spirit Gathering Formation, Spirit Sealing Minor Formation, Nine

Palace Eight Trigrams Formation!

Only when Qing Shui saw these formations did he feel that the Sky Prison Sect's saber formation was but child's play. Real formations could kill opponents by binding them without even needing them to move their hands.

There were many things that could be used to set up formations, including rocks, flags, demonic beast's bones, gemstones, demonic crystals, trees, boulders.

True masters of formations could make use of everything in the surroundings, including gales, rain or even lightning. An absolute expert in setting up formations could trap and wipe out a clan or an aristocrat clan...

Formation masters were a supreme existence but formations required the support of spiritual energy. Therefore, a heaven-defying formation required some heaven-defying items to be activated.

Formation masters were required to have great talent. There was no lack of people who cultivated formations in the world of the nine continents but there were very few who could excel through formations.

However, no one would offend low level formation masters either. They didn't wish to find themselves trapped and killed in their own homes...

Qing Shui spent his remaining time cultivating the Nine Palace Steps and the five formations.

The Nine Palace Steps was a tedious process. Qing Shui had known of Nine Palace Numerology from very long ago but had not been able to reach this stage. In the past, he was only able to pull off the Trinity Steps and could even barely reach the Four Phases Steps, let alone being able to achieve the Nine Palace Steps.

One Origin Steps, Duality Steps, Trinity Steps, Four Phases Steps, Five Elements Steps, Six Lunar Steps, Seven Star Steps, Eight Trigrams Steps, Nine Palace Steps.

This was the different levels for the Nine Palace Steps from the lowest to the highest. In the past, he had managed to reach the Four Phases Steps but back then, it was too hard. Moreover, he didn't know the actual way of using it. It was only now that he learned that such footwork was used like this and the effects were really heaven-defying.

When he was feeling sick and tired of practicing, he would sit down and take a look at the formations but it was just taking a look.

The Duality Minutest Formation was a binding formation like the one he knew of. This formation was split into six gates, namely, life, death, dark, light, illusion and perish. The gate of death was in the northeast, the gate of life in the southwest, gate of illusion in the extreme east, gate of darkness in the extreme south and the gate of light in the northwest.

People who were trapped would be at a loss if which gate to head to.

The gate of death was hard to enter but easy to stay alive; the gate of life was easy to enter but one would be trapped easily. The perish gate was the key to destroying the formation and shan't be mentioned now; the illusion gate and would allow the enemy to lose his way easily, finding himself trapped. The dark gate was that pitch black darkness and brought about terror that one would find hard to handle; the light gate in the northwest was the only one which could be passed through.

Usually, there would be both the gate of life and gate of death in most formations but there were also legendary death formations. However, these were too vicious and most people would not set up such a formation unless they have some huge grudge with the opponent.

Another thing was that death formations had not been passed down successfully throughout the course of history. Moreover, sometimes, "death formations" could also possibly be overcome by absolute power. Only when the person trapped was sufficiently powerful, would he be able to break through some powerful formations. Otherwise, there would be no other ways to breakthrough these formations since even if people outside the formations were to use brute force to break through, they would also cause the people inside to suffer from fatal injuries. This was the reason why formations were very profound.

...

Unknowingly, it was time for him to leave the Realm of the Violet Jade Immortal. After cleaning up, Qing Shui left, feeling satisfied. It had only just turned dark and when he went out, he saw the Five-Headed Demonic Spider quietly staying in the hall.

When it saw Qing Shui, it ran over happily, letting out a cry which made Qing Shui feel a sense of amiability. Having stayed here for such a long time, he had only been able to communicate with the Five-Headed Demonic Spider through his consciousness. Hearing that soft voice it made him feel very warm inside.

AST 896 – Five Elements Minor Formation, Nine Palace Eight Trigrams Formation

It was already dark outside. It was now the start of winter and was quite cold at night. He wasn't able to enter the Realm of the Violet Jade Immortal for a short while until the later half of the night.

There was still some time and Qing Shui walked out of the place with the Five-Headed Demonic Spider. When one had strong powers, one would feel braver. He felt as if he wasn't scared of anything in the world now. If he were to give it his all, he felt that even a person with a strength of about 700 stars would not be able to do anything to him. Of course, if his Nine Palace Steps and formations reach the small success stage, his battle prowess would probably increase many times.

He had attained a breakthrough. Qing Shui felt that the path before him was wide and straight, extremely smooth sailing. That indescribable sense of joy caused a huge change of emotions within him.

He should be considered an elementary Martial Emperor now and when he was not holding any weapons, he could unleash a strength of close to 200 stars. At this stage, one's physical strength was secondary. What was most important was how much power one could release and what cultivation level of opponents one could defeat.

For example, those people from "Sky Prison Sect". Although they were a group of elementary Martial Saints, no one dared to offend

them. This was how unfair things were at times. Between people of the same level, if one were to be wearing a Divine Armor, the entire situation would be overturned and the fight would become one-sided. Or if one side were to hold a Divine Artifact, he would be able to get rid of his opponent quickly.

The same could be said for martial techniques, therefore, sometimes, even amongst those of the same cultivation realm, depending on the martial technique, the powers that could be unleashed could have vast differences. Therefore, sometimes, cultivation realm was not everything.

Formation Masters and Poison Masters were such existences.

He competed with the Five-Headed Demonic Spider in speed once again, successfully casting it far behind him. In the past, he could only look at the Five-Headed Demonic Spider's speed enviously but now, to think that he could throw him far behind. This was a tremendous improvement.

When it was about time, Qing Shui once again entered the Realm of the Violet Jade Immortal together with the Five-Headed Demonic Spider. It was already after 1 a.m. and the second day had started. He didn't wish to waste even a little bit of time and thus what he needed to do now was to stabilize his abilities and work hard to reach a breakthrough in both his Nine Palace Steps and formations.

Of course, he couldn't ignore the Roc Form either and would need to work hard cultivating it too.

Nine Palace Steps!

Qing Shui now spent the majority of his time on the Nine Palace Steps because when he was cultivating this, he could carefully increase his understanding of the positionings of the Eight Trigrams Orientation in the process of doing so. This would be a great help for his application of the formations in the future and it would hasten his rate of cultivating formations.

The cultivation of the Nine Palace Steps was very difficult and was not something that he could succeed in just by putting in hard work. This required extremely high talent and wouldn't work no matter how many miraculous medicines one took. It was because the slight changes in this technique were not ones which could be easily taught and required one to be able to adapt to the situation. There was another world within the Nine Palace Steps and one required a high ability in calculations and deduction skills.

It was like divinatory trigrams in the Eight Trigrams, where the combinations of the eight trigrams covers all the phenomena in the universe. All these require deductions and thus it was very hard to cultivate the Nine Palace Steps.

In the previous life, Qing Shui was not very clever but neither was he stupid. He was just slightly better than ordinary people. After coming to the world of the nine continents, because he received the legacy of the Ancient Strengthening Technique and had awakened the Yin-Yang Image, causing his spirit energy to be very powerful and he was able to remember the things he saw at first glance. His brain was also very developed as well.

Therefore, right now, his deductions of the Nine Palace Steps were still considered successful but he would also find it quite tiring. Whenever he felt tired, he would sit down to take a break. This was fatigue of both the mind and the body.

After sitting down, Qing Shui would still take a look at those formations. He was now looking at the tools which could be used to set up formations. Although everything could be used, including rocks, trees, flowers, flags or even sabers and swords, there were things to pay attention to.

In all, the higher the spiritual Qi the items contained, the better it was. Rocks could be used and were the most convenient but usually would only have an effect for an hour. As for trees, ordinary trees, spiritual trees or some precious flowers and plants would have a powerful impact on the formation.

There were also some demonic beast's bones or using demonic beasts directly. Of course, humans work as well. Powerful cultivators were filled with spiritual Qi to begin with and could thus have some simple control over formations, including guarding the life gate or to increase the difficulty of breaking the formation.

Another possibility was to use weapons. Weapons tended to hold some spiritual Qi and even a certain amount of killing intent. Some killing formations would need to employ the use of weapons stained with fresh blood or even killing weapons.

The most standard item to use was still flags. Flags were refined from demonic beasts' bones and beast hide. Their effects were great and could be made from many different types of materials. They were more convenient than things like rocks and trees since the latter were restricted by terrain conditions.

Five Elements Minor Formation!

The Five Elements Minor Formation was a formation based on the reinforcing and counteracting theory of the five elements, metal, wood, water, fire and earth. Usually, five people would work together to create the Five Elements Minor Formation and it would be best if the five users each practiced five elements martial techniques of different element nature. It would be fine if it wasn't so since the positions in which each of them would take would be the positions of the five elements, representing each of the five elements.

The Five Elements Minor Formation made use of the reinforcing nature of the five elements to be able to instantaneously focus all the powers of the five onto a single person. This required strong teamwork between the five.

This formation also tapped into the theory of the counteracting force of the five elements. As long as they were able to find out the element nature of the opponents, they would be able to send the person who represented the counteracting element and then transfer all their powers to this single representative.

If the prowess of the Five Elements Minor Formation was unleashed well, their abilities could be increased multiple times.

However, it required good coordination in their footwork and in the formation. When any of them were being attacked, the other people must be able to coordinate well and “transfer” their powers over.

The Five Elements Minor Formation used the Five Elements Steps. While it could be used with other footwork techniques, the Five Elements Steps could help bring the Five Elements Minor Formation’s prowess to its limit. Qing Shui was still unable to use the Five Elements Minor Formation for now.

This formation was not to be underestimated. Qing Shui was only able to unleash the prowess of this Five Elements Minor Formation through the Five Elements Step to its highest limits and knew that it was extremely powerful. Each person standing at each of the five positions would also receive a boost in their abilities as well.

The Five Elements Minor Formation was also known as the Five Elements Minor Killing Formation. With good coordination, if they moved quickly, they would be able to kill their opponents very rapidly.

Spirit Gathering Formation!

Qing Shui was very happy upon seeing this formation. Through the use of some gemstones or precious items which were rich in spiritual Qi to set up this formation, amassing the Spiritual Qi of Heaven and Earth, the people in the formation would have their cultivating speed increased greatly. The amount of spiritual Qi gathered was related to how powerful the Spirit Gathering

Formation was. It was suited for people who were training in seclusion, increasing the chances for them to achieve their breakthroughs.

Spirit Sealing Minor Formation!

This Spirit Sealing Minor Formation could seal up a small area, causing the spiritual Qi outside to be unable to enter. For now, Qing Shui had no idea what it could be used for. He planned to think about this in the future.

The last one which could be used was the most powerful, even amongst all the formations that Qing Shui knew of.

The Nine Palace Eight Trigrams Formation!

The Nine Palace Eight Trigrams Formation was split into eight gates, namely healing, life, pain, limit, view, death, wonder and opening. There were multiple combinations it could form and was a much more powerful binding formation than the Duality Minutest Formation. It was also a killing technique because as long as Qing Shui could successfully master the Nine Palace Steps, he would be able to freely kill enemies who were multiple times stronger than himself...

The Nine Palace Eight Trigrams Formation added the positions of the Nine Palace on top of the basis of the Eight Trigrams Formation, increasing its prowess multiple times. This formation was very profound and its effect would already be very strong if one could just figure out the gist of it. One could use rocks or any

other material objects to set up the formation.

However, the items used would affect the prowess of the Nine Palace Eight Trigrams Formation. This formation could be created single handedly but could also be done by multiple people. When humans were used to create the Nine Palace Eight Trigrams Formation, it would increase the agility and adaptability but if it was items, they would have to bind the opponent within.

These were currently the five formations which Qing Shui could cultivate. He was very satisfied. And Qing Shui sensed that the prowess of all the formations were related to the Nine Palace and only after he had picked up the Nine Palace Steps successfully would he be able to increase the prowess of the formations by a lot.

In the blink of an eye, one week passed by!

Qing Shui basically spent his days in the area near the deity statue.

Seven days were considered short to other people but to Qing Shui, it was practically two years. Two years were not considered short and two years of hard work had let him made quite a large improvement. However, he had not learned to create formations. He only cultivated the Nine Palace Steps to the Seven Star Steps.

When Qing Shui took a break, he could cultivate his hammer techniques, especially the [Raging Blow]. With his abilities raised by several tens of times now, when he performed the [Raging Blow], the prowess was considerably terrifying.

Raging Blow could allow Qing Shui's overall powers to be increased by 50%. When he was holding the Violet Gold Divine Shield and the Thunder God, he could unleash an explosive attack of 700 stars.

If he was holding the Big Dipper Sword, he would be able to unleash an explosive attack of over 600 stars. However, under the effect of the Seven Star Armored Vest, his defence could increase by a lot.

However, the limitations to Raging Blow were too much. When performing it, his movements would be relatively slow and it was hard to be effective. Despite this, it was still an undeniably powerful attack. Although the time for him to unleash attacks was much better, it was still hard to take effect unless the opponent didn't move.

If not for this reason, the Raging Blow would definitely be considered a legendary battle technique. Right now, just being able to attain some success in cultivating it, Qing Shui was already able to increase his overall abilities by 50%. It might become more powerful in the future but Qing Shui was still worried that the more powerful it was, the slower the speed would be.

Several days passed by again before Qing Shui headed back toward the city. However, he travelled very slowly. At the rate he was going, he would probably still need about a month before arriving at the city.

Since he had no things to do, Qing Shui took his time to travel across the towering mountains, open up his mind and relax. On the contrary, when in the Realm of the Violet Jade Immortal, he would spend his time working hard in his training. He was already finding the world more and more interesting and his abilities would also be steadily improving.

The Sky Penetrating Mountains was very vast and there were many powerful demonic beasts. There was the Golden Dragon King, Five-Headed Demonic Spider, Five-eyed Lion Wolf King and the Long-armed Vicious Monkey King. These were the ones that Qing Shui had chanced upon but they were definitely not the only few powerful demonic beasts. Qing Shui had only chanced upon them in the area they were located in and there were still many other powerful demonic beasts in the other areas. However, there would only be one of them across a million demonic beasts and the chances of encountering one was extremely low.

AST 897 – Leaving The Sky Penetrating Mountains, Gathering Again

One month later, Qing Shui was already back at the 1,000 li zone of the Sky Penetrating Mountains. This was considered a relatively safe area and one would be able to encounter many cultivators who were seeking adventure or hunting for treasures. At this moment, Qing Shui felt very warm. Although staying for a prolonged period of time in the Sky Penetrating Mountains didn't make him feel suppressed, humans were social creatures who lived in groups. In the end, he still craved to be in places where there were other people.

Cultivators of all realms could be found in this 1,000 li zone. Everyone was in their own groups, the place was bustling with activity and sounds of laughter flooded the area. The Sky Penetrating Mountains was generally a very dangerous area, but this area was an exception. There were basically no encounters with powerful demonic beasts here.

This area was surrounded by huge mountains, caves, and the like. No one had managed to comb through the entire area and even if someone had managed to comb through a mountain ten times, they still might have missed out stuff. Moreover, no one would conduct a search like that.

Many people would enter and exit every day. Some people would leave with satisfied smiles and great returns, while others would leave in tears, bringing back the corpses of their kin or partners who were covered in blood. There was no end to the number of such occurrences in the World of the Nine Continents daily.

No one paid attention to Qing Shui's appearance in the 1,000 li zone, nor did he called out his Five-Headed Demonic Spider. He merely went on his way on foot, using the Nine Palace Steps.

Qing Shui was very familiar with the concept of practice makes perfect. It took him one whole month to cross 100,000 li. The Nine Palace Steps were very profound and if Qing Shui wasn't so unfamiliar with it, he would not be so slow.

In this one month, he had spent about eight to nine years in the Realm of the Violet Jade Immortal. Now, Qing Shui had just managed to bring the Nine Palace Steps to the small success stage. It was very hard for him to grasp the Seven Star Steps to the Nine Palace Steps.

The Nine Palace Steps had nine positionings. The world was split into eight directions, and Qing Shui still did not understand the theory of the Nine Palace and why they were split into nine palaces. With the Nine Palace Steps, Qing Shui was able to leap freely and reach any spot or positions between the Nine Palace. This was due to the profoundness of the Nine Palace.

It was as if one step could bring one into an entirely new space.

The Nine Palace Eight Trigrams Formation added the Nine Palace positionings onto the basis of the Eight Trigrams Formation. It caused the people trapped within in the formation to be confused and surrounded by killing intent. Qing Shui could rely on the Nine Palace Steps to freely dart around within the formation, launching

sneak attacks and could kill from any corner or position, catching his opponents while they were unaware.

He had only succeeded in picking up the Nine Palace Steps three days ago and thus the distance he had traveled for the past three days was much greater than what he had covered before, making Qing Shui feel overjoyed. He continued to use the Nine Palace Steps even when he was in the Realm of the Violet Jade Immortal and even when he ate. He would take a short nap when he was tired.

In these Nine Palace positionings, Qing Shui was like a spirit who was extremely agile. Qing Shui enjoyed this feeling a lot. Moreover, after attaining some success with the 'Nine Palace', Qing Shui realized that there was an area limit on the 'Nine Palace'. This area was one that was set out by him and as long as he appeared in a place, the area around him would be considered the area of the 'Nine Palace'.

1,000 meters!

His 'Nine Palace' reached out for 1,000 meters and the area he could control was up to 1,000 meters. Qing Shui was very satisfied with this. It was enough. When he moved, the 'Nine Palace' would automatically move together with him.

For the past three days, including the time he had spent in the Realm of the Violet Jade Immortal, Qing Shui was considered to have set the foundations for the Nine Palace Steps. Just this alone could raise Qing Shui's battle prowess by a lot. At least, he would have the advantage in many situations because he was the king in

the 'Nine Palace'. Without breaking through his 'Nine Palace', other people would have no way of defeating Qing Shui.

The Nine Palace allowed Qing Shui to gain the greatest territorial advantage, regardless of the time and location. This was because when Qing Shui succeeded in picking up the Nine Palace Steps, the Nine Palace would forever stay together with Qing Shui. As long as his opponents didn't break through his Nine Palace, Qing Shui would not lose. Moreover, Qing Shui's Nine Palace Steps were still improving.

...

A lady wearing a golden phoenix pleated dress stood at the entrance of the Sky Penetrating Mountains. She has been here for the past two months and would always stand here for a very long time every day. Many people knew that this was Mu Clan's Young Miss.

Judging by how things looked, she seemed to be waiting for someone. However, no one knew who she was waiting for. There was a tent set up not far away, where two old men were playing chess. There were also two old women looking at that lady wearing the golden phoenix pleated dress, a hint of worry in their eyes.

The lady who stood there was Mu Qing. When she returned, she informed the people from her clan that she had some things to attend to and would not be around for some time. Worried that something bad would befall her, the seniors from her clan had over ten elders follow her. She didn't say anything to this.

Actually, the people from Mu Clan also knew that this was because of that young man who had not returned yet. They didn't feel good about it either since that old man from Dong Clan had come here himself and requested for them to take care of that young man. Back then, they had given him their promise but they didn't know that this young man was planning to head into the deeper region.

Mu Qing stood there stock-still. Just her back view made everyone in the surroundings unable to resist her charms. However, everyone knew that it was Miss Mu and no one dared to be insolent.

In a tent not too far away, Dong Yan and Sun Yan was sitting down on the ground, drinking wine. However, they would also occasionally glance toward the entrance of the Sky Penetrating Mountains.

“Eldest Brother, do you think that anything will happen to Third Brother? It has been so long...” Sun Yan finished up the wine in his cup with one gulp and asked Dong Yan.

“Third Brother isn't someone who would die young. Don't worry, he'll definitely be fine. He might even come across some great opportunity.” Dong Yan frowned slightly but his brows very quickly loosened up.

“Is this what Old Master Dong said?” Sun Yan asked Dong Yan suspiciously.

“Old Master said this before too.” When he said this, Dong Yan’s expression lightened up.

“If Old Master had said this, then it must be true.” Sun Yan seemed to feel slightly more relaxed now.

“Did you sense that Third Brother is in fact very suspicious? My gut feelings are quite good. Did you sense that?” Dong Yan smiled and said.

“The fact that the three of us can get together must be because we each have mysterious things about us. Although we might not be the strongest, we can still be considered to be among the top tier amongst the youngest generation.” Sun Yan smiled and said casually.

“Haha, and Third Brother said that he’s still able to protect himself in the Sky Penetrating Mountains. He’s not someone who’s reckless. We can only wait now.” Dong Yan gave it some thought before filling up his wine glass.

“Miss Mu would always stand there and in a daze for very long every day. Do you think she...” Sun Yan looked toward the distance at that unrivaled beauty and said.

“I don’t know. But it seems like something unusual must have happened between them in the Sky Penetrating Mountains.” Dong Yan shook his head and said with a smile.

“Then Eldest Brother you...”

“Haha, I’ve never thought about this before. If a lady wished for a man to revere him, the lady would definitely not wish to be together with that man. I’m still very clear about this. Even I can’t get pass myself.” Dong Yan shook his head and said, smiling again.

“That’s right. If one can only admire, he wouldn’t be mentally in the same state to begin with and the two parties would not be able to get along. The first time I saw her, I knew that his lady would probably only give her heart away to someone stronger than her.” Sun Yan took a sip of wine and grinned.

“If Third Brother can marry this kind of lady, it’d be a good match too. It seems that based on the current circumstances, it won’t be far now.”

“That’s right. When Third Brother comes back, we three brothers must have a good drink together.” Sun Yan once again looked toward the entrance and said.

...

The entrance was within sight. This trip to the Eastern Victory Divine Continent’s Sky Penetrating Mountains could be considered perfect. He should leave soon, after all, he had been away for a very long time.

As he thought of this, he walked leisurely toward the mountain's entrance. However, when he lifted his head to look at the entrance, he fell in a daze. He saw that beautiful lady's silhouette, still beautiful as before.

Qing Shui thought that his eyes were playing tricks on him. He shook his head and looked over once again, only to find out that she was still standing there, looking at him in a daze. That intoxicatingly beautiful face was still as familiar as ever.

Her skin was white and tender, her brows charming and her eyes were full of emotions. Her beautiful skin gave out a transcendent feeling like that of the autumn's moonlight and her shoulders slender. Standing there, she gave off an independent charm which was graceful and otherworldly. From afar, one seemed to be able to sense an aura like that of an orchid.

Her golden colored phoenix dress gave her an additional poised and dignified aura, making her seem like a fairy from the heavens, not being able to blend in with the people in the surroundings.

Qing Shui saw Mu Qing's beautiful figure shudder for a moment before she walked toward him.

Dong Yan and Sun Yan could also see Qing Shui from their positions and they also stood up. After taking a few steps, they saw that Mu Qing had moved and they stopped.

However, the smiles on their faces replaced their previous worried expressions.

Many people in the surroundings were also stunned. Rumors had it that Miss Mu didn't care for any men. However, for the past few days, she seemed to be waiting for someone. It was now that they finally realized that she was waiting for a man, a young and handsome man.

How could this be possible? A lot of people in the surroundings were stunned. They looked at Miss Mu walking over to that man, as if her emotions were very turbulent.

“You're back!”

Mu Qing walked up close to Qing Shui, until there was only one step distance between them. Her beautiful gaze looked at Qing Shui, unblinking. However, she quickly took one step back.

Qing Shui didn't know how to describe his current feelings. He saw the lady before him, as well as Dong Yan and Sun Yan. He felt a faint joy. There were still people here who were thinking about him.

“Mmm, thank you!” Qing Shui smiled and said.

“Are you alright?”

Mu Qing didn't know what to say. Earlier, she felt happy to see Qing Shui and came forward subconsciously. However, it was as if she was suddenly awakened and knew that they could only be

considered friends at most. Why did she have those illusion previously?

Therefore, she took one step back. Even though she seemed to have things she wanted to say, there didn't seem to be a need to say anything now.

“Let's head back first!” Qing Shui said softly.

Mu Qing smiled and nodded.

Qing Shui's words could be clearly heard by the people around them. While it sounded normal, others didn't interpret it as such. The two of them acted very normally when they stood there and talked to each other. However, to outsiders, they seemed like a married couple who had been together for many years.

Looking at their expressions and at this heartwarming scene, everyone believed that their relationship was unordinary. It was because Miss Mu had never been so close with a man before, which made such an expression even more surprising.

The two of them walked out, side by side. It was at this moment that Dong Yan, Sun Yan, and some other old men walked over. The other people in the area also left, but together with their departure, news also spread out.

The attention that Miss Mu received was quite high. If she were to remain unmarried, no one would say anything; but if Miss Mu

were to fall for a man, that man would be in trouble.

AST 898 – Matters Impossible To Unravel, Mu Qing's Musings

“Third Brother!”

“Third Brother!” Dong Yan and Sun Yan both called out.

“Big Brother, Second Brother and Elders, you’re all here!” Qing Shui grinned at Dong Yan, Sun Yan and the old men surrounding him. Qing Shui was very familiar with all these old men.

“It’s great that you’re back! It’s great!” the old men all laughed heartily.

“Third Brother, Lady Mu and the others have been waiting here for you for two months.” Sun Yan said, smiling at Qing Shui.

“Alright, let’s not talk about that. Aren’t you both the same? We all hoped for his safe return.” Mu Qing smiled lightheartedly but she could not help but over-think what Sun Yan had said.

Qing Shui could see that there was a large tent not far from them and they all walked into it. The relationship between Dong Clan and Mu Clan was originally not bad but somehow, due to Qing Shui’s influence, there was a subtle change between them.

This subtle change wasn’t a game-changer but it was indeed weird. Each time the members of the two clans met, their conversations would revolve about whether Qing Shui had obtained the Sky Penetrating Grass.

“Third Brother, what rewards did you gain from your trip to the Sky Penetrating Mountains?” Dong Yan smiled but the underlying meaning of his words was clear from his tone.

Mu Qing couldn't help but feel a bit startled when she heard Dong Yan's words. She also had an indescribable curiosity about the matter. She wanted to know if Qing Shui had obtained a Sky Penetrating Grass.

“Well, I've gotten quite a few items and my luck was quite good, I found it.” Qing Shui laughed.

Everyone was happy for him. Even though he had only known Dong Yan and Sun Yan for a short period of time, their friendship was still true. People like them rarely befriended others but when they did, they would treat them like brothers.

No one could really explain what fate was but Qing Shui valued it and so did Dong Yan and Sun Yan. The phrase bird of a feather flock together accurately described their relationship.

“Third Brother have you fulfilled your purpose of coming to the Eastern Victory Divine Continent?” Sun Yan smiled at Qing Shui.

“Yes, I think so.” Qing Shui felt unusually relaxed as he said this.

“Good, then, we three brothers should travel around Eastern Victory Divine Continent to see all the famous landscapes around

here.” Dong Yan said to Qing Shui with a chuckle.

“Qing Shui, you promised that you would stay at my residence for two days. You can’t go back on your words.” Mu Qing said to Qing Shui with a smile, looking very natural.

Actually, everyone present was very surprised but they did not say anything and acted as if nothing had happened. Mu Qing blushed as she quickly realized that her words could cause some misunderstandings. She was a woman inviting a man to stay at her house...

The residence she mentioned was not the Azure Cloud Pavilion but her Mu Clan’s manor. She did not think too much about it when she said those words casually, but now she noticed how romantically ambiguous she sounded.

“Sure. The Mu Clan is a family of famous Demon Refiners. It’s my honor.” Qing Shui replied kindly after noticing Mu Qing’s embarrassment.

Mu Qing felt rather conflicted. She could not explain her feelings, it was as if she was in a reverie and everything around her was unreal.

“Since Lady Mu has brought this up, Third Brother should go to visit the Mu Residence first, we have time.” Sun Yan grinned at Qing Shui then turned to look at Mu Qing who was still blushing.

Mu Qing took a few glances at Qing Shui. She could feel that this man was different from before, his eyes seemed to be profound and more importantly, he gave off a different feeling and she could not really pinpoint what it was.

Qing Shui took out the Nv`er Hong from his collection and brought out a large piece of piping hot barbecue meat. He had roasted it in his Realm of the Violet Jade Immortal and had not found the time to eat it previously so he heated it up now.

Since he already brought out meat and wine, he laid out them out. The tent was instantly filled with the smell of meat and wine.

“Nv`er Hong? How can it smell so good?”

Everyone looked with amazement at the vat of Nv`er Hong that was just opened. They were all shocked by the aroma of the liquor. However, their shock wasn't unusual, this wine was over 2000 years old after all...

As long as one was able to keep a wine for 1,000 years, even wine of the poorest quality would become a 'god-level' wine. At the very instant that the vat was opened, many people actually suspected that it was wine which had aged for 1,000 years.

Among them, there were definitely people who have tasted 1,000 years old wine but they definitely had not tasted aged Nv`er Hong of that vintage since no one would use Nu`er Hong for that because its quality was too low. Furthermore, this Nv`er Hong that Qing Shui brought out smelled even better than those expensive wines,

who could imagine how many years it was kept? What extravagance...

Actually, there was another reason for its aroma. Due to the fact that Qing Shui's Realm of the Violet Jade Immortal was filled with Spiritual Qi, the smell of the wine had become even more fragrant.

Everyone ate and drank happily. Many of the Elders ate and drank heartily because they had never eaten such delicious meat and this was probably their only chance to drink a wine like this once in their lifetimes.

As they drank, they looked to Qing Shui.

“Dear Elders, don't worry. Even though I don't have much, I have enough to share some vats of wine.” Qing Shui could understand their expressions.

The Elders were extremely happy when they heard Qing Shui's words. They were trying to drink sparingly before as Qing Shui had only given them a vat each, which was only about 300 jin. Now that they knew that they could have more, they drank wantonly.

After his Realm of the Violet Jade Immortal reached the 7th layer, its area expanded so Qing Shui could put more wine into the realm. Furthermore, due to the current time ratio of the realm, it only took two and a half years in the real world to get a 1,000 years old wine.

Thus, he could spare each of them a few vats but he did not want to give them too many. He did not wish for the others to suspect him because of it. After all, having such a precious treasure could easily attract the obsessive envy of others.

Everyone agreed to stay for the night before leaving for the capital city the next day.

It was now evening and Mu Qing had not spoken much during this time. She merely watched Qing Shui, Dong Yan, Sun Yan and the others chatting and drinking. Dong Yan was the one that spoke the most.

Qing Shui said quite a lot too but most of the time he was just answering the questions that others asked to him.

“Qing Shui, let’s go for a walk. There is something I want to talk to you about.” Mu Qing smiled and said when everyone had finished their meals.

“Okay!” Qing Shui nodded. He nodded to the others to excuse himself and left with Mu Qing.

He did not know what Mu Qing wanted to talk about but he could sense that she was somewhat worried. He did not question her but instead continued walking beside her.

This was the second time that they found themselves in such a situation. When he first entered the Sky Penetrating Mountains it

was like this and now on the day he left the mountains, it played out the same way. This was quite a coincidence but Qing Shui felt the situation was vastly different from before.

“Did you have any trouble when you were returning?” Qing Shui asked, referring to a few months back when Mu Qing and her people traveled back from 100,000 li into the mountains.

“No, everything was fine. We returned very quickly. I guess you must have gone through quite a few dangerous situation.” Mu Qing did not hear Qing Shui mentioning how dangerous Sky Penetrating Mountains was, he only briefly explained that he avoided a few encounters. However, she knew that Qing Shui had definitely met some troubles along the way.

“It’s alright. I am very talented at escaping so I manage to avoid harm.” Qing Shui answered without going into the details.

Mu Qing thought about how Qing Shui seemed to know a lot. He was not only intelligent but difficult to read. She did not expect that he could reach 300,000 li into the Sky Penetrating Mountains and leave at will. In addition to that, she thought about how her grandmother had predicted that his strength would soar greatly soon...

“Qing Shui, are you leaving soon?” Mu Qing’s brows knitted as she asked.

“Yes, I will be leaving soon. My journey has been quite long.” Qing Shui said as he noticed Mu Qing’s expression.

“Let me send you off when you leave!” Mu Qing laughed.

Qing Shui replied with a laugh and said to her, “Don’t you have something you want to say?”

“Not really. I didn’t really mean anything.” Mu Qing replied lightheartedly as she laughed it off.

Qing Shui knew that there was something on her mind but she had decided to refrain from telling him. He knew that because excuses did not match with her personality. Suddenly, Qing Shui remembered an issue.

Sky Prison Sect!

“Is this something to do with Sky Prison Sect?” Qing Shui couldn’t help thinking about that since there was no doubt that Sky Prison Sect was very powerful. Did they discover something?

“Do you not take me as a friend? Just tell me. If you need my help, I wouldn’t refuse you.” Qing Shui remembered how this woman had helped him out quite a bit. Especially what she gave him at the Deity Statue. No matter what, he was still grateful and admired her.

“Could you teach me a few easy methods to escape a formation?” Mu Qing hesitated for a moment before asking softly. She knew that it was taboo to ask this. Who would teach others their

consummate skills?

Qing Shui thought for a moment and felt that his guess was correct. Sky Prison Sect must have gotten some sort of clue. Perhaps, she did not tell him the details because she did not want to drag him into the matter.

“I must have been too impulsive. I’m sorry.” Mu Qing quickly apologized when she saw Qing Shui looking blankly back at her.

“It’s not that. If you are willing to learn, I can teach you what I know.” Qing Shui replied, smiling as he knew that she had misunderstood.

Mu Qing lifted her head and looked at Qing Shui. After she confirmed that Qing Shui was not just agreeing to her request perfunctorily, she smiled. “Thank you!”

Qing Shui was not kidding either. Formations may be very powerful but they really depend on an individual’s cultivation and talent. If any of his friends wanted to learn from him, he would not reject them and would teach them whatever he could but how much they could learn was pretty much up to themselves.

“You’re welcome!”

Qing Shui did not pursue the issue of the Sky Prison Sect any further. Since she did not wish to talk about it, he did not want to pry. As she was interested about formations, he knew what he

could teach her. He did not really care much for those formations that the Sky Prison Sect used. Some of the experts in the Sky Prison Sect may know more advanced formations but he doubted that those were really that powerful. If they were so powerful, those savages from the Sky Prison Sect wouldn't stay contented just like that.

Qing Shui knew that he hadn't really researched deeply about formations but that did little to hinder him from teaching others. With his photographic memory and the success of his Nine Palace Steps, he could basically see through many formations very easily. He might not be very proficient but he knew that it wouldn't be long before he could set up formations himself. Using this opportunity, he could learn more about formations himself while teaching Mu Qing. How much she could really learn from him was otherwise dependent on herself.

Qing Shui handed her a picture with the Yin-Yang Image, The Four Symbols, Eight Trigram and a diagram of the Nine Palaces. There were also some written explanations. He even showed her the Nine Palace Steps but how far she could go with that technique could only be determined by her innate talent for it.

AST 899 – Worries, Going To The Mu Residence, An Aristocrat Clan

Capital City...

Eastern Victory Divine Continent's prefecture and capital city were very close to each other that it made no difference what to call them. It could be said that they were basically the same place.

They only took a short time to return to the capital city but they took a few breaks on their way back because they were not in a hurry. During their breaks, Qing Shui would either travel around with Dong Yan and Sun Yan, or he would teach Mu Qing about formations and the Nine Palace Steps.

Unfortunately, they only took a few breaks so Mu Qing's progress was relatively slow. Nonetheless, Qing Shui still felt that she was quite talented. Besides, she had also mentioned that she had a special treasure to help her. Qing Shui could tell that this was true. Otherwise, she wouldn't have been able to progress at this speed.

In addition to that, she was wise so she managed to grasp the concepts of Nine Palace Steps and the other formations quite quickly.

After that, Dong Yan and Sun Yan also joined them. They felt rather awkward at first, even though they had quite a good relationship with Qing Shui. After all, when Qing Shui and Mu Qing were practicing together, it looked to the brothers that the pair were dating...

It was only when Qing Shui invited the brothers to join them that they found out what the pair were doing. The brothers accepted his invitation and listened to Qing Shui while he gave his explanations. But when it was time for them to reflect, both men would distance themselves. Qing Shui was speechless towards this behavior but did not want to explain any further. If he tried, it would appear as if he was trying to hide something instead.

Every time this happened, Mu Qing would smile at Qing Shui. She was already certain that this man was extraordinary and that his talents were definitely immeasurable.

Once a woman starts to grow curious about a man, she would start to like that man soon. Women are usually more curious than men. When a woman that was usually apathetic becomes curious, it will be even harder for her to control her feelings.

Qing Shui wanted to help Mu Qing to the best of his abilities. He knew that her problem was definitely connected to the Sky Prison Sect. If he wasn't going to deal with the matter personally, he wanted to make sure that Mu Qing could handle her opponent's formation techniques.

With this in mind, Qing Shui also got the Elders to join in. He wanted to familiarize them with those formations and their positions. At the same time, he wanted to see how difficult it was to impart this skill.

This was because he wanted to teach his own family members

some formations when he returned to his Qing Residence. This was a good chance to see how long it took.

Supreme techniques were considered superior because not everyone could practice it and reach its highest form. In addition to that, anyone that practices a supreme technique would become much more powerful. Even practicing a bit of the skill would provide its users with great benefits. Nonetheless, perfecting it was extremely difficult.

Everything seemed peaceful in the expensive looking capital city, it might be due to Qing Shui's new mindset. They took a beast carriage and headed towards the Mu Residence.

Mu Qing spent most of her time at the Azure Cloud Pavilion and would rarely return to the Mu Manor.

It only took a short time for their beast carriage to arrive in front of a luxurious residence. Qing Shui and the others alighted in front of the large entrance doors. There was a large sign hanging above the door inscribed with two words—Mu Clan.

There were two large demonic beast stone statues at the sides of the entrance. They were a little like the Qilins and a little like the tigers in his previous life. Qing Shui was surprised that he could not identify them.

“Those are statues of Cloud Beasts from the prehistoric times, they are auspicious creatures.” Mu Qing explained after she noticed that Qing Shui had been staring at the statues for quite a

while.

“Do they still exist?” Qing Shui asked nonchalantly as he walked into the manor with Mu Qing.

“They are rarely spotted nowadays. These Cloud Beasts are considered Divine Beasts.” Mu Qing replied as she shook her head.

“Missus!”

“Elders!”

.....

The guard at the entrance greeted Mu Qing and the other Elders respectfully. They were now at the manor of the Mu Clan or more accurately, one of the branches of the Mu Clan.

This was the branch of Mu Qing’s great grandfather and it was the largest branch. The other branches were still alright but they were visibly on a decline.

They had not walked for a long time before a handsome scholarly middle-aged man and a few other people came out to welcome them.

“Third Elder!”

“Third Elder!”

“Dad!”

The old men greeted the middle-aged man respectfully while Mu Qing ran over and held the man’s arm. This man was Mu Qing’s father.

Qing Shui was amazed when he sensed this man’s strength. If he hadn’t grown stronger over this period of time, he wouldn’t have been able to tell!

It was above 150 stars!

However, Qing Shui knew that this man hid his strength well. If his spiritual sense hadn’t become so keen, he might not be able to tell that man’s true strength even if Qing Shui was stronger.

Qing Shui did not know if the other members of the Mu Clan knew his strength. However, from the way that the Elders greeted this Third Elder, he knew that this man was not just an ordinary member of the clan.

The man also observed Qing Shui carefully. He had seen his daughter walking beside Qing Shui and could tell that his beloved daughter had finally met a man that she could fall in love with.

On the other hand, Mu Qian was also rather amazed by Qing Shui. He was unable to clearly see through this young man. Of all

his children, Mu Qing was the most powerful. She was much stronger than her other siblings and was one of the most outstanding members of the Mu Clan's younger generation.

Moreover, Mu Qian had never shown less love for Mu Qing just because she was a girl, in fact she might even be his favorite child. It was very likely that the future of the Mu Clan was dependent on Mu Qing.

He never interfered with his daughter's' love life. Despite this, he held worries for his daughter since she didn't seem to have eyes for any man, nor had she ever had a close relationship with a man. However, even he himself found that many of the sons of the other aristocrat families simply could not compare with his daughter...

That wasn't really important to him. As long as his daughter had a man she loved, that was enough for him. Unfortunately, she had never found a man she loved. It was only two months ago that he found that his daughter was acting little weird, only to find out that she was actually waiting at the entrance of the Sky Penetrating Mountains for a man.

It was easy for him to get information about the situation but he only knew very little of the details. He was just worried, but he would never interfere. This was the reason why he only got to see the man that his daughter had fallen for now.

He couldn't help but feel curious about Qing Shui, though he did trust his daughter's judgment.

“You must be Qing Shui!” Mu Qian smiled mildly at Qing Shui.

The other Elders had already excused themselves and left. Even Dong Yan and Sun Yan left after greeting Mu Qian. They said that they would continue drinking with the old men. Qing Shui found it difficult to wrap this around his head...

The people who remained with Qing Shui were Mu Qing, Mu Qian, three other young men and a woman who was just over twenty. The three young men and the woman looked somewhat similar to each other.

“Hello sir, I am Qing Shui. Sorry for the bother.” Qing Shui smiled at Mu Qian. This man was really handsome. His genes were probably the reason why Mu Qing was considered the most beautiful woman in the capital city.

“It’s not a bother. We’re happy to have you here. Come, let go inside to talk.” The man said then gestured to Qing Shui. The group then went into the main hall.

Qing Shui was from the same generation as Mu Qing. Many other members of the Mu Clan around their age had heard the news that Mu Qing invited a man to the Mu Manor. Recently, it was rumored that this man had a close relationship with Mu Qing and was now even at their manor.

They swore that they would have a look at this man since they hoped that Mu Qing would marry one of the men from the aristocrat families in the capital city. She was more than qualified

to choose.

At the same time, the other Elders in the family were having the same thoughts. However, they did not dare to bring this up because they knew Mu Qian's personality. The Third Elder, Mu Qian, loved his daughter the most and would never allow anything that would hurt his daughter.

Qing Shui and the others walked into the main hall, or rather the guest hall. As they chatted, Qing Shui quickly found out that the three young men were Mu Qian's sons and that young woman was Mu Qian's youngest daughter.

Mu Qian only had these five children. For a large clan like theirs, having just five children was on the lower end of the spectrum. Of his five children, Mu Qing was his middle child with two elder brothers, a younger brother and a younger sister.

They were all half siblings who had different mothers. Mu Qian had three wives. His eldest son and his third son were from his first wife. His second son and his youngest daughter were from another wife, while Mu Qing was her mother's only daughter.

They had not sat for long when three charming older women came in. It was easy to tell who they were. After a round of pleasantries, everyone settled down.

The people closest to Mu Qing were now sitting with her at this family dinner.

Mu Qian's eldest son was already 40. His mother was Mu Qian's first wife. Although he seemed to have maintained his looks, perhaps because of his low cultivation, he was already showing signs of his age.

Mu Qian's eldest son, Mu Fang did not inherit his father's talents. His limits were probably already fixed at the peak Grade of Martial King so it was difficult for him to even breakthrough to Marital Saint.

Even though large clans had good alchemy and battle techniques, not everyone possessed the prerequisites to advancing to Martial Saint, let alone a peak Martial Saint. Nonetheless, most of the Martial Saints in the World of the Nine Continents were indeed found in large clans.

Mu Qian's second son, Mu Jian did not look much younger than Mu Fang. He was stronger than Mu Fang and was a Grade Three Martial Saint. Even though he could still be considered quite powerful since he was a Martial Saint, his standards were nothing to boast about compared to the other members of the Mu Clan.

Mu Qing was one of the strongest members of the entire Mu Clan but she was a woman. That was still a disadvantage for her no matter how much talent she had and how powerful she was.

Mu Qian's third son, Mu Lin, inherited his father's talents. He was one of the members of this branch with the highest potential. Despite his age, he was already a Grade Ten Martial Saint and was only a step away from the peak. Qing Shui was surprised as that meant that Mu Lin's innate talent was really quite remarkable.

Lastly, the youngest daughter, Mu Xue, was actually an early Martial Saint despite her age. Qing Shui found it puzzling that for this branch, the younger they were, the more gifted they were...

Qing Shui also observed Mu Qian's three wives. The cultivation level of his first wife was rather low but his two other wives were quite powerful. Mu Qing's mother was actually even more powerful than Mu Qing...

In another hall, there was another group of men who were around Mu Fang's age. There was food and wine on the table but they were all looking at the man in the middle of their group, which was a strong burly man.

"Big Brother, Third Uncle favor Qing'er most. We can't interfere but we can't let Qing'er marry a nobody without any background," a man in green silk clothes frowned.

"That's right, Big Brother. It is not advantageous for our family if she marries that man. Young Master Yin is one of the most well-known figures in the capital city, his family is also extraordinary," a thin skinny man smiled at the burly man.

"Fifth brother, do you have any ideas? I also wish that Qing'er would marry Young Master Yin. He would be a good husband for her. Our families are well-matched," the burly handsome man spoke mildly though there was a certain firm magnetism about his voice.

AST 900 – Young Master Yin, Yin Yuanjiao, Crushing His Hand

The skinny man in embroidered clothes laughed, as he glanced at the leader of the Mu Clan's younger generation, "Nobody within his generation can challenge the Third Elder's supremacy. Everyone knows that Mu Qing is his favorite daughter and even the grandfathers don't dare to interfere with the matters regarding her marriage."

The man did not say a word but looked calmly at the skinny man, his statement was redundant because all of them knew that, they were more interested in what he was about to say.

"But now that it has come to this, we could inform Young Master Yin. Don't you know the Third Elder's personality? The Yin Clan is a large clan, so the Third Elder won't say anything even if he comes. He likes Mu Qing so much but it's a pity she doesn't fancy him."

The skinny man that the others called Fifth Brother smiled and did not elaborate any further, but everyone knew what he meant between the lines. They knew he chose Young Master Yin because the Yin Clan was very powerful and Young Master Yin was also very talented. Even though he was not stronger than Mu Qing, he was still a cultivator with a lot of potential.

On top of that, Young Master Yin was very hot-tempered and was a bit of an egomaniac. He was so conceited that he believed that he was the only one worthy of Mu Qing. He had long since viewed Mu Qing as his woman. For this reason, many people in the capital city

avoided getting close to her because they were afraid of him.

When the skinny man brought this up, everyone was 'enlightened'. They definitely could not go over and cause any trouble, neither did they dare to. However, Young Master Yin was the best choice in this situation. If this Qing Shui was unable to defeat Young Master Yin, he would naturally be kicked out of the equation, he might not even get to keep his life.

Even if Qing Shui was a super expert that could defeat Young Master Yin, Young Master Yin's twisted personality meant that he would definitely get all the experts from the Yin Clan to attack Qing Shui. If he couldn't get rid of Qing Shui in an open and above-board manner, Young Master Yin was a man that would take the despicable route to make Qing Shui disappear.

Thus, they were convinced that if they brought Young Master Yin into the picture, they would reach their goal. At the very least, Mu Qing and Qing Shui wouldn't end up together.

.....

Dong Yan and Sun Yan drank and chatted with the other old men. All of them were quite comfortable with each other because they had spent two months together, besides the relationship between the Dong Clan and the Mu Clan had always been rather good.

"Dong Yan!" an old man laughed as he drank a large gulp of wine.

“Sir, go ahead.” Dong Yan quickly replied.

“Do you know your Third Brother well?” the old man hesitated before asking.

Dong Yan was a little stunned. He knew that Qing Shui and Mu Qing seemed to have something going on between them. These old men were probably trying to find out more about Qing Shui’s background.

“I only know that our Third Brother is from the Greencloud Continent. We met him by coincidence and found that our personalities gelled well, thus we became sworn brothers. Thereafter, Qing Shui went to the Sky Penetrating Mountains. Bringing it that up, the time that you all spent with him was in no way less.” Dong Yan laughed. There was nothing to hide and he knew no information that needed to be hid.

The old men laughed and didn’t say anything else. Actually, they hadn’t interacted a lot with Qing Shui. Nothing in particular happened and when Qing Shui and Mu Qing were dealing with the people from Sky Prison Sect, the old men were not there to witness anything.

But, the fact that Qing Shui could venture 300,000 li into the Sky Penetrating Mountain all by himself was ample proof of his capabilities. That wasn’t something that anyone could do. Besides, they had watched Mu Qing grow up. A rational woman like her would never make a mistake when judging a person.

.....

Qing Shui had an easy time with Mu Qing's family. Mu Qing had brought Qing Shui with her and this was enough for her family members. Mu Fang and Mu Jian were quite direct. Especially Mu Fang, who came across as an honest and straightforward man. However, it was clear that they cared a lot for their younger sister.

Mu Lin was young but was a man of few words. He seemed to dislike talking to others. On the other hand, Mu Xue—Mu Qian's youngest daughter, was very lively. She asked Qing Shui many questions and was very curious about him. This was because Qing Shui was a man that her sister brought home, though their relationship hadn't been explained.

Mu Xue spoke with a bright voice and some of her questions really stumped Qing Shui. The others just smiled and didn't interrupt her. They were also very curious. Luckily, they had their inquisitive Mu Xue to ask the questions in their mind.

"Brother Qing Shui, is my sister beautiful?" Mu Xue giggled at Qing Shui as she asked.

"Beautiful!" Qing Shui answered this easily.

Mu Qing felt a little uneasy sitting beside Qing Shui. Her young sister was eccentric and quick-witted so she was worried that she might dig out the truth.

“So do you like my sister?” Mu Xue looked at Qing Shui with her beautiful eyes.

Mu Qing wanted to stop her younger sister but after Mu Xue asked this question, Mu Qing realized that her heart was thumping very fast. She didn't dare to look at Qing Shui and tried her best to remain calm.

“This is a secret between your sister and myself. I can't tell you that now.” Qing Shui said rather mildly with a smile. He felt that he was in a difficult spot and didn't know what to say.

There were no proper answers to that question, as Qing Shui didn't have such intentions. Otherwise, he would have taken the chance to confirm that he liked her. He could only give such an answer for now.

Even though no one pointed it out, everyone felt that it was a little fishy. Luckily, everyone was being tactful, so they didn't ask further. Mu Qing was relieved when she heard Qing Shui's answer but was also a little disappointed at the same time.

Suddenly, they could hear footsteps from outside. One of their guards came over to the hall and reported, “Third Elder, Missus, Young Master Yin is here.”

Mu Qian and his family frowned. Other than Qing Shui, everyone present knew of Young Master Yin's personality since he came over more than a couple of times. The Mu Clan and the Yin Clan were also on good terms.

Mu Qian hesitated for a moment, then he smiled and said, “Let him in. Since Qing Shui is here, they should be introduced to each other.”

Qing Shui smiled without saying a word, but Mu Qing frowned, looking rather helpless.

“That annoying man always bothers my sister, his skin is even thicker than the city walls,” grumbled Mu Xue.

“Xue’er, don’t say such things,” her mother quickly stopped her. Even though she sounded as if she was rebuking her daughter, she had a pleased expression.

A man entered the hall. Qing Shui was quite surprised when he saw Young Master Yin. He was tall, muscular and almost a head taller than himself. Qing Shui had grown taller by an inch over this time, he was not short— being about 1.8m. However, the man in front of him was about 2m tall.

The man was fit and well-built, with a sort of sunshine boy look. His features were well-defined and he had a wild charm about him. This type of man was very attractive to some women.

“Third Uncle, Aunts, you are all here!” the man greeted Mu Qian and his wives.

“Yuanjiao, you’re here.” Mu Qian smiled.

“Yes, I heard that Mu Qing is back, so I came over,” the man gave a simple smile.

Unexpectedly, this sharp-looking man could actually give such a simple and honest smile. Even Qing Shui didn't feel that this man had any visible flaws.

Mu Qing did not respond, nor did she even give the man a glance. The man did not seem unhappy about that, as if he was used to such a treatment. Qing Shui remained silent as he observed the situation. It was very odd, he felt as if he was a bystander watching a show.

“So, you're Qing Shui. I am Yin Yuanjiao. Nice to meet you,” the man turned over to Qing Shui and smiled and even extended his hand out.

“I'm Qing Shui. Nice to meet you too!”

Qing Shui shook the man's hand. When he held the man's hand, Qing Shui didn't try to pull his hand back because he knew that the man wouldn't let go.

Qing Shui could feel an abnormally large amount of force from the man's hand. This man had huge hands which made Qing Shui's hand seem relatively small.

Qing Shui looked at Yin Yuanjiao. This man had contempt in his

eyes, as if he viewed Qing Shui as a clown. Yin Yuanjiao's temper rose because he didn't want to see any other man close to Mu Qing.

Yin Yuanjiao sneered as a golden glow came from his hand and he wrapped his hand around Qing Shui's hand entirely. Rashly, due to his overwhelming emotions, Yin Yuanjiao decided to crush Qing Shui's hand.

Mu Qian acted like he didn't notice but Mu Qing looked at Qing Shui, feeling a little worried. Yin Yuanjiao felt like killing Qing Shui on the spot when he saw Mu Qing's expression.

Yin Yuanjiao increased the force he was exerting.

Qing Shui looked at Mu Qian. He didn't know what this 'Third Elder' was planning, but Qing Shui was starting to hate this man in front of him. Since everyone acted this way, he decided that he will let the 'Third Elder' clean up the mess later!

Qing Shui squeezed his eyes shut and he channeled force to his hand!

Crack....

Oh...

Bone-chilling sounds of consecutive cracking sounds rang out, suddenly mixed with painful cries.

Qing Shui let go of that large deformed hand. At the same time, Yin Yuanjiao's other hand tried to quickly hit Qing Shui.

Qing Shui went with the flow and blocked that blow!

Crack!

Another round of bone-cracking sounds filled the air...

The people who were present were quite shocked. They were well aware of Yin Yuanjiao's strength. He was considered quite powerful among the younger generation. It was already shocking that Qing Shui could crush his hand, but no one expected that a mere block from Qing Shui would be strong enough to shatter the bones in Yin Yuanjiao's arm!

That arm was totally crippled. Qing Shui was about to hit Yin Yuanjiao's head with his palm, which would certainly kill him, but Mu Qian quickly stepped in and stopped Qing Shui, "Stop! Show him mercy..."

Mu Qian didn't know what to feel. He only wanted to see how Qing Shui would react but this outcome was completely unexpected, even though his goal was reached.

Qing Shui didn't plan to kill Yin Yuanjiao; he knew that Mu Qian would stop him. It was also clear that in truth, the Mu Clan and the Yin Clan weren't really on good terms.

The reason for the tension between the clans was due to the matter between Yin Yuanjiao and Mu Qian. Yin Yuanjiao had begged the Elders to go to the Mu Clan to help get Mu Qian betrothed to him.

The Yin Clan was a large aristocratic family which had the same status as the Mu Clan. Besides, Yin Yuanjiao was quite talented, so a connection through marriage was a good thing for both of them. A marriage would help consolidate the position of both families. The Yin Clan had requested to set up a marriage between Yin Yuanjiao and Mu Qian but it ended badly, with the Yin Clan losing face.

The Mu Clan actually rejected them. If a request for marriage was set up between two large aristocrat families, they were usually not rejected. Children in such large clans usually didn't have the freedom to choose their marriage partners. They were usually used as tools to create alliances between clans.

AST 901 – Changes To Events, Wait And See

The Mu Clan had rejected them. Although they had done so in a tactful way, it was inevitable that the Yin Clan would feel humiliated. Therefore, while there didn't seem to be any problems on the surface, if the chance were to arise, the Yin Clan wouldn't mind stepping down on the Mu Clan.

Young Master Yin had tried to rely on the fact that he was considered quite strong in the Yin Clan to make it clear that he wanted Mu Qing to marry him out of her own free will. By saying this, he was making it clear to others that he was going to regain the pride that the Yin Clan had lost from this. If anyone were to interfere, that person would be going against the Yin Clan.

Since Young Master Yin truly liked Mu Qing, no one found this statement strange. On the contrary, it allowed the Yin Clan to regain some of their pride. He didn't overstep his bounds and merely said that he must successfully court Mu Qing and his effort would definitely let him succeed. Therefore, even the Third Elder couldn't say anything either. Young Master Yin hadn't said anything too overbearing, so how could they possibly beat up the other party just because he liked their daughter?

Most importantly, Yin Yuanjiao was also tactful. Maybe it was because he knew that he could not win against Mu Qing in a fight and thus decided to not offend Mu Qing. Although he was impetuous, he still knew his limits. However, it seemed like he had hit a snag.

It wasn't a problem for him to crush someone's hand or even kill

a nameless person in this city. However, this person was already the Mu Clan's guest and if anything were to happen to this person while he was in the Mu Residence, it would be a slap to their face.

Therefore, the people from the Mu Clan weren't very happy. Additionally, there some people from the Mu Clan who hated Young Master Yin.

The reason that Young Master Yin dared to act so bold was that he had investigated beforehand. He knew that Qing Shui was not a relative of the Mu Clan and had merely encountered Mu Qing by chance. They had then entered the Sky Penetrating Mountains together.

A kill was a kill. If the Mu Clan lost face, he could just admit his mistake. It was fine as long as he could eradicate this guy who was next to Mu Qing. He had carefully planned out everything, and even his fury was calculated.

He had underestimated Qing Shui because he didn't believe that this young 'gigolo' would be his match. After all, a demonic genius like Mu Qing might not even be found in ten million people. It wasn't that easy to encounter someone as talented as her.

But now he knew he found out that he was wrong, very wrong. One of his hands was crushed, while the other hand was badly fractured. This was just his opponent's casual attack, or rather, they hadn't even done anything.

What on earth was this fellow's cultivation realm?

Young Master Yin wasn't the only one who wanted to know this. All the others present were curious about this as well. Even though Mu Qing knew that Qing Shui was well-learned and even knew about formations, she had always thought that Qing Shui's cultivation level wasn't too high. At least, she thought that his cultivation shouldn't be as high as her. But now, she felt that her way of thinking was very funny.

"Senior, I'm sorry to have caused you trouble. I wasn't able to control my strength well," Qing Shui smiled and said to Mu Qian, seemingly embarrassed.

This statement made Mu Qian feel a little awkward. He could tell what Qing Shui was hinting. Earlier, he had also wanted to test out Qing Shui's abilities and he was sure that Qing Shui was stronger than that Young Master Yin. However, this wasn't something he could say.

Additionally, Mu Qian had really wanted to make use of Qing Shui to teach Young Master Yin a lesson. After all, they couldn't do it themselves. Since his daughter seemed to like Qing Shui too, he thought of it as giving Qing Shui a trial.

"It's no trouble, no trouble. This is a spar. Injuries and deaths are inevitable." Mu Qian said calmly before walking over to Young Master Yin.

At this moment, Yin Yuanjiao's hands were basically crippled and he was dealt a great blow. He suddenly let out a loud cry and

ran out.

There were no signs of chaos in the room, nor even a single drop of blood. However, Yin Yuanjiao's hands were crushed and they were crushed to the extent that they were basically crippled. Only some sort of miraculous medicine could save his hands.

Yin Yuanjiao's departure stunned everyone. On the other hand, Qing Shui was wondering if this Young Master Yin would go crazy.

He wasn't worried that people from the Yin Clan would come here for now since there was still the Mu Clan. Moreover, even without the Mu Clan, Qing Shui had the confidence that he would be able to attack and evade them as he wished. This was because his Nine Palace Steps had already reached the small success stage. As for formations, it would still require a very long time.

However, with his current cultivation level, paired up with the Nine Palace Steps, only people who were much stronger than him could do anything against him.

...

"Eldest Brother, Young Master Yin was crippled by Qing Shui..."

Someone walked into another hall in the Mu Clan and reported. The people here were the strongest experts amongst the younger generation in the Mu Clan, except Mu Qing's siblings weren't here.

“Crippled? Haha, Fifth Brother was right. Qing Shui can now forget about having a good end unless he holes up in the Mu Clan and not head out,” the staunch man addressed as the Eldest Brother laughed and said.

“The Yin Clan definitely won’t let Qing Shui off, not even if the Mu Clan were to stand up for him. Sister Qing’s refusal of the Yin Clan’s marriage proposal had already caused them to feel humiliated. Now that Young Master Yin was crippled by the guy that she brought back, they definitely won’t take this lying down. After all, the Yin Clan isn’t any weaker when compared to the Mu Clan.” The skinny man dressed in embroidered clothes frowned and said.

“What’s so bad about that?” asked the staunch guy puzzledly when he noticed his Fifth Brother’s expression. Amongst all the siblings here and in terms of all their siblings, this Fifth Brother was the most intelligent one.

“I previously heard that Sister Qing and the others were learning formations?” the skinny man’s expression suddenly became unnatural.

“Formations? Like the type that the Sky Prison Sect uses?” the staunch man frowned and looked at his Fifth Brother.

“I think so. Does Eldest Brother know who she’s learning it from?” said the Fifth Brother as he gradually regained his calm.

“Qing Shui?”

“That’s right. Another notable fact is that there wasn’t even a corpse of the Sky Prison Sect’s ‘Flower Crusher’ left behind. They had entered at about the same time as Sister Qing and the others. Most importantly, we’ve received news that their target was Sister Qing.” The skinny man wearing embroidered clothes looked at his Eldest Brother and said slowly.

“The Flower Crusher’s abilities is quite high. Most importantly, if their group were to form the saber formation, there’s almost no one amongst the younger generation who would be able to do anything against them. Couldn’t they’ve died because of some powerful demonic beasts they encountered?”

“They had died at the hands of Sister Qing’s and that Qing Shui’s. I just received this news too.” A substitute member for their formations who had followed the Flower Crusher had spread this news. When the Flower Crusher was attacking Sister Qing and Qing Shui, this substitute member coincidentally needed to relieve himself and thus left for a short while. When he came back, everyone was dead. That were no demonic beasts, nor were there Sister Qing’s and Qing Shui’s corpses. Earlier, they were attacking Sister Qing and Qing Shui, so there can only be one answer. Sister Qing and Qing Shui had killed the Flower Crusher.” The skinny man sighed and said.

“Sister Qing’s abilities aren’t sufficient to kill this opponent. This Qing Shui isn’t simple,” the staunch and handsome man looked at his 5th Brother and said with a smile.

“Earlier, he had even crippled Young Master Yin with great ease.

A person who dares to attack someone from the Yin Clan is either a person who is very strong but acts weak or simply an idiot. This Qing Shui is clearly not an idiot. Maybe everyone was wrong about him.” The skinny man tapped his left hand gently on the table, his expression was one that was full of caution.

“From now onwards, don’t do anything. Don’t talk about this matter either.” The staunch man hesitated for a moment before saying.

The others nodded. They had attained their goal, but they were still uneasy. However, it was still nothing since the others wouldn’t think that they had done any harm to others.

...

“Father, the Yin Clan will definitely find trouble for Qing Shui this time around.” Mu Qing looked at Mu Qian worriedly and said.

“Haha, don’t worry. Our Mu Clan isn’t any weaker than their Yin Clan. Moreover, they only have their lack of abilities to blame for this incident. They can’t blame others.” Mu Qian didn’t seem to care at all, as he said this.

“This thing has nothing to do with the Mu Clan. If the people from the Yin Clan send their people here, don’t worry, I’ll talk to them myself.” Qing Shui smiled and said.

“That can’t do. You’re my friend. How can I let you deal with this

alone...” Mu Qing said anxiously. Although she was anxious, her voice was still euphonious and refined.

“Qing Shui, no matter how sorry our Mu Clan is, we can’t do this. Moreover, you’re my daughter’s friend. As long as I, Mu Qian, am alive, I’ll make sure that you’re safe.” Mu Qian looked at Qing Shui and said calmly, his tone was so firm that no one would doubt his words. It also had a powerful confidence.

Qing Shui smiled and nodded. The atmosphere lightened up a lot too.

“I heard that you’re teaching my daughter about formations,” after everyone sat down again, Mu Qian smiled and said, as if he was asking casually.

Qing Shui was stunned for a moment before he smiled and replied, “It’s not really teaching. I only know a little about this. Miss Mu seems to be interested in this, so I’m just sharing with her what I know about them.”

“Qing Shui, you’re too humble. Formations are very profound and it’s hard for ordinary people to come into contact with them. In the Eastern Victory Divine Continent, the sects and clans who know about formations are also limited. These sects and clans are all very powerful.” Mu Qian looked at Qing Shui and said with a smile.

Qing Shui smiled in return. He knew that Mu Qian was actually suspicious of his identity since no one knew of his background.

Additionally, he seemed to be very close with Mu Qing, and as a father, it was natural for Mu Qian to want to know about Qing Shui.

“I’m not from a clan or a sect that specializes in formations. I’ve only had a lucky encounter previously and got my hands on a book related to formations, thus managing to pick up a thing or two about it. If Miss Mu isn’t interested in this, then I wouldn’t have thought about bringing it up.” Qing Shui explained.

Qing Shui then asked about some things related to refining demons. This made Mu Qian very astonished. He hadn’t expected that Qing Shui would know about refining demon too. He didn’t ask about Qing Shui’s cultivation realm but he knew that this young man was very strong. He wasn’t sure if Qing Shui was stronger than him but he felt that Qing Shui shouldn’t. It was because it would be too unbelievable if he was.

The meal lasted for about two hours. Mu Qing brought Qing Shui to a room for him to rest in. She had her own independent manor in the Mu Clan and there were several buildings there.

Qing Shui didn’t see Dong Yan and Sun Yan. He guessed that they should be still drinking. As he followed Mu Qing to her manor, Qing Shui was actually pondering about some matters.

For example, when they had brought up the issue of formations, Mu Qian had suspected his background. He must have suspected that Qing Shui was someone from the Sky Prison Sect or was someone who specialized in formations.

What Qing Shui didn't know was that Mu Qian was aware that he wasn't from the Sky Prison Sect and that he was someone which the Sky Prison Sect wouldn't be able to forgive. It was because Mu Qian knew of the fact that Qing Shui had joined forces with Mu Qing to kill the Flower Crusher from the Sky Prison Sect. Mu Qian had known of this fact earlier than that 'Fifth Brother'. He wasn't afraid of the Yin Clan, but he was afraid of the Sky Prison Sect.

The Sky Prison Sect wasn't on amiable terms with many sects and factions in the city, but the other factions couldn't do anything about it. While some of the powerful sects from this area could go against the Sky Prison Sect, they wouldn't eradicate them just because they had the ability to do so. If they were to battle it out, regardless if the result was a victory or a loss, they would still suffer heavy losses.

AST 902 – Accidental Touch, Qing Shui's Experiment With Formations

Qing Shui and Mu Qing walked towards her manor. Although Mu Qing appeared to be absent-minded, she would occasionally steal glances at Qing Shui.

“Are you worried about the Yin Clan?” Qing Shui asked with a smile.

Mu Qing sighed and said, “Qing Shui, we have a problem.”

Qing Shui smiled, he really didn't feel troubled at all. He gently asked, “What is the problem? Is the Yin Clan that strong?”

“It is not the Yin Clan that I am worried about. My concern is whether the Sky Prison Sect will be added to the mix.” Mu Qing's heart was a mess. She could not say it out loud, but she was worried that Qing Shui might be killed the moment he left. Therefore, she wanted to tell him everything of importance to allow him time to better prepare.

Although Qing Shui also had the Sky Prison Sect on his mind, seeing the hesitation from Mu Qing was already enough to let him know what she was thinking. When she first learned formations he already knew that people were of flesh and blood. Qing Shui was internally grateful for the sympathy he received at that time.

If it wasn't because she was concerned for his safety, she would

see to it that he left this dangerous place unharmed. Qing Shui thought of this while walking, a smile leaking from his face.

If you give me a foot worth of respect, I will return it to you ten times. He would never change his principles and would sincerely aid those that had helped him before.

“Qing Shui, I am not sure how you escaped from the beasts in Sky Penetrating Mountains, but do you have any confidence in escaping the Eastern Victory Divine Continent?” Mu Qing realized she had almost reached her manor and stopped to ask Qing Shui.

Everything about this incident was a mistake. It was merely a coincidence that Qing Shui, Mu Qing and the others had entered the Sky Penetrating Mountains together but it was due to this coincidence that Mu Qing had been rescued from the hands of the Flower Crusher.

However, this created resentment with the Sky Prison Sect. On top of that, the incident with the Yin Clan was another fuse that was lit. She was well aware that this fuse was a short one, and it was ready to explode anytime.

The Jun City and Continent's Capital area was home to many groups that carried a huge influence. These groups included the Sky Prison Sect, Tyrant Fist Sect, Godly Sword Sect, Mu Clan, Yin Clan and more... Although all these influential powers were huddled around Jun City and the Continent's Capital area, there weren't many conflicts or disputes, so their interactions were limited.

Although the Mu Clan was more famous in the area where the Mu Clan and Yin Clan resided, the Yin Clan wasn't weak by any means. Additionally, since both clans resided in the same area, it was sometimes inevitable that they had to cooperate with each other, which led to conflicts of interest when the distribution of goods appeared uneven on either side.

After hearing what Mu Qing had to say, Qing Shui hesitated "Do they know?"

What Qing Shui was referring to was the incident where they killed the Flower Crusher. If they were discovered then there would be no place to hide. No wall was ever airtight.

"At the time we had missed one, the news of this has only spread recently and the Sky Prison Sect is trying to condemn us now." Mu Qing looked at Qing Shui, this time everything with a calm countenance.

"If it has been discovered then so be it, it's not a huge deal. If they come, we'll cut them down. Let's see if they still want to condemn us. Do they think we are some small fry?" Qing Shui mumbled while shaking his head. However, the situation was very clear.

Mu Qing looked at Qing Shui with surprise. She knew that this man never lied, nor was he the type to show off. If the enemy hadn't forced his hand, he wouldn't expose his true strength.

“Qing Shui, I am being serious here. The Sky Prison Sect is very strong.” Mu Qing gave Qing Shui a glance. She had dragged out her voice a little in displeasure.

Qing Shui rubbed his nose a little and smirked. “Alright, not to worry, there won’t be any incidents. How’s the practice with positioning and footwork coming along?”

“It has been a mess. I have no idea where to start, so the progress has not been good.” Mu Qing felt a headache just thinking about it.

Qing Shui stopped, then suddenly closed the gap between them using One Origin Steps. Although his footwork looked tricky, it was executed elegantly as though he was drifting.

Qing Shui was using One Origin Steps on purpose. If the opposition also knew the One Origin Steps, then they would dodge away like a conditioned reflex.

Mu Qing was shocked by Qing Shui’s sudden movement. Her mind was also confused for a bit, but she dodged instinctively. To her surprise, she was actually moving away with the strange movement technique that she learned recently.

From this single action, she understood what Qing Shui was trying to do and started to dodge seriously. The progression in a real battle was faster and Mu Qing was well aware of this fact.

Qing Shui tried to make his move from different angles, but his

attacks were nothing but feints. The purpose of his moves wasn't to hit his target, but rather to apply pressure. Right now, Qing Shui could freely cast from a variety of angles to force Mu Qing to move.

Qing Shui approached with growing coercive pressure to develop Mu Qing's potential. His footwork speed, angles and precision were steadily increasing as he observed Mu Qing's growth in skill. Compared to before, she was utilizing the One Origin Steps with more fluidity. At this point, Qing Shui began to use the Duality Steps, which could also be called Yin Yang Steps.

Nine Palace Steps had nine realms like that of a staircase that rose a step at a time. The higher one reached in the steps, the stronger it became and the further one could see. Each realm was the basis for the next realm.

Mu Qing was barely proficient in Duality Steps. With Qing Shui's persistent pressure Mu Qing's footwork became a disorderly mess. Qing Shui's goal was to put Mu Qing in a difficult position without completely discouraging her. As such, Qing Shui would leave a bit of room for Mu Qing to maneuver each time. This was to help her to fully adapt to the situation.

This method of practice was forcing her to dodge while drilling her with attacks, the effect was immediate but this approach cannot be used persistently. Continuously using this method would slow down her realm level up. Nonetheless, this method would allow her to hone her skill more, to the point where she will become able to execute the steps as though it was second nature. Therefore, if it was required, they could ask the elders of her clan

to drill her later.

Almost two hours had passed since they started the drills. This was the door to Mu Qing's manor. Just like that, their footwork interaction had brought them to Mu Qing's garden.

Her garden was anything but small, its length was several hundred meters long with three pavilions, one building, one arbor, a crescent corridor, a pond, a bridge...

Mu Qing could feel her usage of the Duality Steps improve as the practice went on. She also felt that her actual combat abilities had powered up a bit. However, as she was thinking this, she had accidentally lost her composure for a split second. That was when Qing Shui's strike hit its mark.

Had she already turned sideways, then Qing Shui's strike would have missed. Although Mu Qing had turned, she was one step too slow. Qing Shui wasn't aware that she had lost her focus. In addition, he wasn't using much force with each strike, so he knew he wouldn't cause any injuries even if he did hit her.

Thus, his hand moved towards the soft bosom of Mu Qing's slanted body. Although part of the blame could be placed on how voluminous that part of her body was...

At this instant, both of them froze. Mu Qing blushed red in embarrassment and instantly glared at Qing Shui with a hidden bitterness and took two quick steps back. At the same instant, Qing Shui could feel the exquisite softness and elasticity that

represented the charming tenderness extenuating from Mu Qing's body.

“Sorry!” Qing Shui said after hesitating slightly.

“I lost my focus, it's not your fault, I'll lead you to your room.” Mu Qing tried to calm herself down, almost saying it as though it was the least bit of concern to her.

The pink building was where Mu Qing resided, it was half the height of the other buildings.

The other buildings were pale gray with a color that reflected the natural atmosphere.

The interior of the building was spacious. Qing Shui chose a room directly on the first floor. The center of the first floor had a living room, with a few bedrooms and a kitchen surrounding it. The second and third floor should have a similar floor plan.

This was a norm on the Eastern Victory Divine Continent. Unlike buildings in the Central Continent and the Greencloud Continent, the first floor only comprised of the living room with a kitchen on the side. The second and third floor were mostly bedrooms. At most, there would be a very small public area that could be shared.

Mu Qing didn't enter the room with Qing Shui, but said while smiling, “There are beddings and blankets inside the closets in the room, all of which are brand new.”

“Okay, thank you!” said Qing Shui.

“You must be tired, you should rest. See you tomorrow!” Mu Qing said with a smile.

Qing Shui walked Mu Qing to the door and watched her graceful figure disappear from view before returning to his bedroom. Qing Shui’s mood was a mess, but what he wasn’t aware of was that someone else’s state of mind was even more disorderly.

Mu Qing!

Once she left the building that Qing Shui was staying in, she headed straight for her own building. From the time she was at the building where Qing Shui was until her first couple of steps into her own building, she had endured. Mu Qing let out a breath as her heartbeat began to accelerate and her face flushed to a beet red.

Her face felt hot. Mu Qing quickly walked into her room and closed the door behind her, as if she was afraid someone would see her. It was a shame that nobody could see her stunning charm in this moment.

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Qing Shui was inside the Realm of the Violet Jade Immortal. He held a few pebbles that were about the size of cobblestones in his hands. He looked towards the area around eighty meters to the North-West and started throwing stones towards that direction. This time the ground had already collected a dozen of stones.

Qing Shui was experimenting with formations. This was his first experiment in setting the formations, especially when it was the Nine Palace Eight Trigrams Formation.

This formation was the most powerful one that Qing Shui could cast especially since only one person was needed to use this formation. Thus, Qing Shui set aside the Duality Minutest Formation for now. If the Nine Palace Eight Trigrams Formation was unsuccessful, then he would move on to the Duality Minutest Formation.

In comparison, the Duality Minutest Formation was like a smaller and simplified version of the Nine Palace Eight Trigrams Formation. Therefore, Qing Shui opted to practice setting the Nine Palace Eight Trigrams Formation instead of the Duality Minutest Formation.

In addition, Qing Shui's Nine Palace Steps resonated perfectly with the Nine Palace Eight Trigrams Formation's effect. This was also the reason why Qing Shui wanted to practice the Nine Palace Eight Trigrams Formation.

Although Qing Shui wasn't practicing the Duality Minutest Formation right now, he knew that he must understand how to use it later. Even if he doesn't use it now, other people will want to learn it, like people from the Qing Clan or even someone like Mu Qing.

He had to at least teach her something. In the case of Nine Palace

Steps, he wanted to see what realm she could reach. For the Duality Minutest Formation, it was a formation used to trap the enemy and aid the user in killing them. On top of that, he could also teach her the Five Elements Minor Formation. This should be enough for now. If she could practice the Nine Palace Steps and the two formations meticulously she should be able to get on without much trouble.

Qing Shui continued to throw pebbles while shaking his head. At least the fountain side wasn't short of pebbles. His pebble tossing speed was slow. Sometimes he would even go back and pick up some pebbles that he had thrown. Qing Shui also drew the Nine Palace Diagram and in the middle he drew the Eight Trigrams Diagram.

The Eight Trigrams Formation was based on the idea of the Eight Inner Gates: Healing, Life, Pain, Limit, View, Death, Wonder and Opening. The Eight Trigrams Formation was already a powerful technique by itself and it was now encompassed by the power of the Nine Palace, the difficulty to master this formation wasn't simply one plus one, so its strength wasn't simply additive either.

When Qing Shui held the last pebble in his hand, he was a bit hesitant, yet he was also excited. Placing this last pebble as the eye of the formation would let him know if his setup was a success or not.

AST 903 – Duality Minutest Formation, The Arrival Of The Sky Prison Sect

Qing Shui held onto the last pebble and was reluctant to toss it. This last pebble was like the equivalent of a person's eyes, its positioning was paramount to the success of the formation. If Qing Shui missed even slightly, the power of the formation would be greatly reduced.

Qing Shui stared at the Nine Palace and Eight Trigrams formation combination and hesitatingly tossed the pebble in his hand into it.

“No reaction?” Qing Shui was waiting for something to happen with the formation, but there were no changes even though he was inside the formation.

“Failed?” Qing Shui was a bit disappointed. Although this was his first attempt, it was nevertheless a time-consuming process, especially when you took into account the time he had spent on researching. Qing Shui felt that his formation shouldn't have failed.

However, the way it looked, it was indeed a failure. Formations were mysterious. It was like borrowing the divine might of the Heavens and Earth. Qing Shui felt this was similar to one of the realms of the mastery of techniques—providence!

Pausing for a moment and studying the formation, Qing Shui confirmed that this first trial was a failure. However, he was not

discouraged. Qing Shui picked up the pebbles from the ground and sat down. He studied the Nine Palace Eight Trigrams Formation, placing more attention on the crucial points of the formation. While doing so, he also practiced his Nine Palace Steps several times.

Then he started tossing the pebbles again. At least, Qing Shui felt he understood what lead to the failure earlier. Every time he tossed the pebbles into position he had the feeling that it was correctly placed, but there was still no effect.

When it came to the Nine Palace Orientation and the Eight Trigrams Orientation, Qing Shui felt that he had a better grasp of it than before. However, he still couldn't pinpoint the exact reason why no reactions had occurred.

This went on for several days before Qing Shui finally accepted the reality that he could not utilize the Nine Palace Eight Trigrams Formation, nor could he understand the reason why.

After his mind calmed down, Qing Shui spent three days experimenting with the Duality Minutest Formation instead. Now that his earlier thoughts had become a reality, he had to practice the Duality Minutest Formation first before attempting the Nine Palace Eight Trigrams Formation again.

The Duality Minutest Formation was a much simpler formation compared to the Nine Palace Eight Trigrams Formation. Qing Shui spent very little time studying it before starting to set the formation. Once he began, Qing Shui could only smile. Compared to the procedure for the Nine Palace Eight Trigrams Formation,

setting the Duality Minutest Formation was a walk in the park.

It seemed that it was true that all formations were tied in one way or another to the Nine Palace Eight Trigrams Formation. Even without mentioning the ones that were simpler than the Nine Palace Eight Trigrams Formation, all the more complex ones required the Nine Palace Eight Trigram as a basis. Although their orientation wouldn't be overly difficult, there were probably some special requirements to make the formation work.

A short while later, Qing Shui was holding onto the last remaining pebble. His continuous failure had made him a bit perturbed. If the Duality Minutest Formation failed again, then he couldn't excuse himself.

Placing the pebble at the eye of the formation that was half a meter from his feet, Qing Shui's heart started to beat rapidly almost instantaneously.

As the pebble fell into place, a gush of majestic Spiritual Qi rose from the ground. The Spiritual Qi then turned into a berserk storm. All the rocks and sand were blown away, including a boulder that was the size of a small pavilion building.

Not only were things hard to recognized through the naked eye, but the sensitivity of his spiritual sense had also been reduced. His abilities also suffered a debuff. The Duality Minutest Formation had opened the Six Gates of Life, Death, Dark, Light, Change and Destruction.

Duality Step!

Once Qing Shui began to cast the Duality Steps, given his familiarity with the Duality Minutest Formation, the atmosphere cooled immediately when he stepped out. Instantly, the immediate surroundings became tranquil, like a secluded ravine. However, just beyond the immediate vicinity, a dust storm was brewing like a raging battlefield but it was still silent.

Once they stepped into the formation, the victim would be immersed in danger and their strength would be greatly debuffed. Furthermore, some areas were rampant with venom and raging infernos which could cause tremendous damage. This was already incredibly deadly and if the victim couldn't escape from the formation, then they would be trapped till death. More importantly, Qing Shui could also ambush them at any time.

No wonder a formations specialist could fend off so many people by themselves.

The Duality Minutest Formation was already so strong, this made Qing Shui yearn for the power of the Nine Palace Eight Trigrams Formation.

Meanwhile, Qing Shui continued experimenting with the Nine Palace Eight Trigrams Formation but to no effect. Thus, Qing Shui decided to pour his remaining time onto focusing on the Duality Minutest Formation.

Just like that, two months passed. In between, Qing Shui spent

some time practicing his Nine Palace Steps and the Ancient Strengthening Technique. In the last couple days, the Ancient Strengthening Technique had two Cycle breakthroughs. However, the increase in strength didn't feel especially invigorating. After all, the breakthrough difference wasn't much, especially when compared to every ninth Cycle breakthrough that increased his strength by several folds.

A normal day's length was equivalent to a hundred days in the Realm of the Violet Jade Immortal. The time he had spent was the equivalent of seventy days in the realm, the time he had remaining was about one month. During this time, Qing Shui made preparations for refining materials used in formations.

Pebbles did not carry much power, and jewels were too precious and extravagant. Therefore, Qing Shui decided to use beast skins and beast bones as Formation Flags. The beast skins and the beast bones collected from the Real of the Violet Jade Immortal were of a high quality.

Qing Shui studied a bit on how to make Formation Flags. Surprisingly, beast skins and beast bones required individual quenching, which was similar to the method of quenching used in talisman crafting.

This time, it was relatively easy to craft the Formation Flags. According to the method of crafting, Qing Shui discovered that the Spiritual Qi within them was adequate, and thus he was very satisfied. With a small amount of Spiritual Qi, the little triangular flags crafted would be one foot in height. Crafting was not taxing in terms of material, but it required ten or more days to craft

approximate ten thousand little flags.

Looking at the little flags, Qing Shui thought of the eye of the formation. That formation node still required a formation flag, but the main flag should be crafted from a material of an even higher quality.

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The next day, Qing Shui rose from bed on time. The sky was barely lit and since it was winter, there was still some time before dawn. Qing Shui walked outside the pavilion building to conduct his morning training. Unless there was an emergency, nothing could disrupt his morning training routine.

Breakfast with exquisite looking items was delivered by a servant from the Mu Clan. Qing Shui had just finished eating when Mu Qing arrived at his door. After seeing that Qing Shui had noticed her, she walked into the room.

“Full?” Mu Qing looked at what remained on the table and said.

“Yes, how about you?” Qing Shui said with a smile. When their gaze met, Mu Qing felt a bit of discomfort and avoided looking at Qing Shui directly.

“Me too.”

When Mu Qing replied, something made a loud and noisy ruckus

in the front yard. The two of them exchanged gazes. Qing Shui appeared to be calm, but Mu Qing had an unnatural expression.

“Let’s go see what’s going on.” Qing Shui said while smiling.

Seeing Qing Shui’s calmness, Mu Qing seemed to calm down as well. Thinking back a bit, Qing Shui had never appeared frightened. This gave her a reassurance because it seemed that Qing Shui had dealt with a lot of things before...

The two of them traveled side by side towards the front yard. Qing Shui dispersed his spiritual sense to observe the surroundings. He was ready for what was coming. The sooner he took care of it, the sooner he could leave.

“Hand over Mu Qing and that boy, or else!”

Qing Shui and Mu Qing hadn’t even reached the front yard yet before they clearly heard an overbearing voice.

“Sky Prison Old Fifth, this is our Mu Clan’s territory, your arrogance will not be tolerated. We haven’t gone to argue with you and yet you come to trouble us, does the Sky Prison Sect have no morality and proper conduct?” Mu Qian said angrily but with restraint.

“People from Sky Prison Sect are here.” Qing Shui said softly.

Mu Qing’s body shook, had they not left any tracks behind, this

wouldn't have happened. However, now that the information had leaked out, the Sky Prison Sect was trying to retain face in this matter. The Mu Clan, the Yin Clan and the Dongfang Aristocrat Clan were much weaker when compared to the Sky Prison Sect, the Godly Sword Clan and the Silken Web Ridge.

The strength of the Sky Prison Sect could only be matched by the Godly Sword Clan. The Sky Prison Sect was arrogant and didn't obey any rules or comply with ethics, but nobody dared to speak their mind on the matter.

By now, Qing Shui and Mu Qing had arrived at the front yard.

Formations. Again with formations.

After he trained meticulously day and night with formations in the Realm of the Violet Jade Immortal, he wasn't excited from seeing formations again. However, the Mu Clan reacted as if an overbearing enemy had just arrived.

Mu Qian's body was shaking uncontrollably. He wasn't alone, even the people around him were shaking. This was the Sky Prison Sect's infamous Formation Destroyer. Now, several elderly people were walking over from a distance.

"Do you actually believe you could move the Mu Clan, Sky Prison Old Fifth?" an angry roaring voice reached them before the owner of the voice arrived.

Immediately after that, four elders in plain clothing arrived. Their hair and brows were white as snow. As if they were just going for a stroll in the park, they exuded a natural authority.

“Grandfather!”

“Third Granduncle, father and Fourth Uncle!” Mu Qian bowed towards the Elders and the others follow suit.

“Mu Old Fart, I am not here to make matters worse. Just hand over Mu Qing and that boy and we will pretend that nothing ever happened. This is the only chance the Sky Prison Sect will give you as a way out, we won’t make things difficult for you guys.” Sky Prison Old Fifth hollered at the elder standing in the middle.

“Haha, you come to my Mu Clan’s domain to take a member of the Mu Clan? Even if you are the Sky Prison Sect, why should I give in? If I am alive and standing, we don’t even fear a life and death struggle. You can dream on about taking someone from our Mu Clan.” The old man spoke with an energy that carried an unwavering authority.

Sky Prison Old Fifth was a refined, harmonious and thin looking old man. His eyes looked ruthless. Although he wasn’t too big, his voice could carry a great volume. He looked at the Mu Clan’s Elder and spoke, “Mu Old Fart, Mu Qing is a member of your clan so I will make an exception. Hand over that boy and we will call things even.”

Qing Shui and Mu Qing had just arrived at the front yard. Qing

Shui was about to speak up when he heard those words and remained silent. He simply walked beside Mu Qing towards the direction of the rest of the Mu Clan.

“That boy has appeared. Mu Qing has as well!”

One of the older members beside Sky Prison Old Fifth hollered, while the others looked towards Qing Shui.

The Mu Clan’s Elders also looked towards Qing Shui and Mu Qing.

“Sky Prison Old Fifth, you belittle us with your provocations and now you dare plan to lay your filthy hands on members of the Mu Clan? You’ve trespassed into our Mu Clan’s territory based on a one-sided statement. Do you take us for some small fry?” The Elder said while sharply glaring at Sky Prison Old Fifth.

“Mu Old Fart, your Mu Clan may be a large clan around here but all of us here are aware that our Sky Prison Sect could demolish your clan with ease. We aren’t here to escalate things, just hand over that boy.” Sky Prison Old Fifth pointed at Qing Shui while gritting his teeth.

AST 904 – Qing Shui's Power, Using Formation To Curb Enemies

Qing Shui didn't feel anything as he looked at the Sky Prison's Old Fifth, who was pointing at him. He didn't show any indication as he waited for the Mu Clan's decision.

Mu Qing was intelligent, but at this moment, she probably couldn't guess Qing Shui's intentions. She didn't believe that Qing Shui was someone who could go against the Sky Prison Sect and thus naturally wouldn't have guessed his thoughts.

Mu Fengyang had controlled this branch of the Mu Clan for 300 years, and his descendants had worked hard to prove themselves. Presently, his branch had become the mainstay of the Mu Clan. However, they were facing the Sky Prison Sect, a great sect whose legacy was much longer and whose abilities were more powerful than that of the Mu Clan.

Now, the Sky Prison Sect had come to their door. However, he knew that if he were to hand up that young man, everything would be over. Although the Mu Clan was in no way comparable to the Sky Prison Sect, the Sky Prison Sect would still not dare to do anything to the Mu Clan, at least for a few more decades.

Mu Fengyang's grandfather was still around, but he was in his final years. At most, he would live only 50 more years. Although the old man no longer involved himself with what was happening in the outside world, if his descendants were threatened with extinction, he would definitely start a war.

Of course, there were people in the Sky Prison Sect who could fight against this old man. Rather, if a strong expert like him were to go on a crazed rampage, even the Sky Prison Sect would suffer great damages.

Moreover, they had never thought of actually eradicating the Mu Clan. However, with the rumors spreading like wildfire, they were fighting to get back their reputation.

Mu Fengyang really felt at a loss. After all, the other party had already taken a step back and decided not to pursue the issue further against the Mu Clan. However, there was no way for them to let that young man off.

Mu Fengyang was very clear that the reason the Sky Prison Sect was here today was just to deal with Qing Shui. Their reputation could be salvaged if they dealt with him. However if they handed him over, the Mu Clan's reputation would be lost...

“Sky Prison's Old Fifth, he's a friend of our Mu Clan. You can forget about taking him away today.”

They were very clear that Qing Shui had saved Mu Qing and the others. Moreover, news had already been spread out. If they were to let Sky Prison Sect take Qing Shui, the Mu Clan's reputation would be completely ruined.

Therefore, Mu Fengyang had no other choice. Even so, in such a life and death situation for their clan, he had considered handing

Qing Shui over. It was because compared to the very survival of their clan, everything else wasn't important.

Furthermore, what had been spread out were just rumors. Rumors would gradually disappear as time passed.

"Today, even if we fight to the bitter death, you guys can forget about bringing him away." Mu Qian looked at Qing Shui and Mu Qing. Seeing his daughter's worried gaze, he was even more sure about his decision.

Moreover, he saw that Qing Shui didn't seem to be scared and that puzzled him. He felt that he had not been able to see through this young man at all. Now, he realized that Qing Shui was becoming even more inscrutable.

"Since that's the case, we can only forcefully bring him away," the Sky Prison's Old Fifth said, unconcerned.

Right now, Qing Shui had become the center of attention. This was something which he had not expected.

"Senior!" Qing Shui called out for Mu Qian, who was just about to speak.

Mu Qian looked at Qing Shui, puzzled.

"Thank you. Since this is something I had done and caused them to look for me, let me be the one to take care of it." Qing Shui said

calmly, his tone as if he had just said something insignificant.

“Qing Shui, don’t!” When Mu Qing heard Qing Shui’s words, she anxiously grabbed his sleeves.

Many people looked at this scene in disbelief. To think that the city’s first beauty, Miss Mu, had this side to her as well. Now, almost everyone had already felt that Miss Mu liked this young man, but the extent of her infatuation still clearly surprised them.

“Trust me!” Qing Shui gently pulled off Mu Qing’s hand.

“Qing Shui, I’ll protect you with my name on the line until I’m dead.” Mu Qian said, after throwing a glance at his daughter.

“Uncle, I’m well aware of your kind intentions. Let me handle this. If I can’t handle it, then you guys can step in. Will this do?” Qing Shui smiled and said. Since this was the Mu Clan’s decision, Qing Shui couldn’t just hide behind them.

Dong Yan and Sun Yan were standing next to Qing Shui. It was clear that they were going to stand alongside Qing Shui.

Qing Shui knew that these two were really people he could consider his brothers.

“Old Master, thank you!” Qing Shui looked at Mu Fengyang and said, bowing, before heading up to the front amidst Mu Fengyang’s astonished gaze. He stood right before the people from the Sky

Prison Sect.

“If I meet that idiot, that fool who thinks that forming a lousy thing like that makes him formidable, I’ll still kill him,” Qing Shui looked at that Sky Prison’s Old Fifth and said.

Lousy thing... Their formation being described as some lousy thing, the Flower Crusher called a fool, and that he would still kill him if they met again...

Many people choked when they heard Qing Shui’s words. No matter what, they had not expected Qing Shui to say this. They couldn’t tell if he was arrogant or simply ignorant.

“You don’t know how big the world is! You’re really courting death!”

The Sky Prison’s Old Fifth was infuriated by Qing Shui’s words as he pounced toward Qing Shui, slapping down his palm toward him. He clearly didn’t give a hoot about Qing Shui.

He had initially only wanted to bring him away. Killing a junior like him wouldn’t reflect very well on his standing. Moreover, killing him here would only infuriate the Mu Clan. However, this young man who didn’t know any better had really infuriated him.

One needed to have backing to be arrogant. Without any resources, an arrogant person could only be said to be ignorant. The attack by the Sky Prison’s Old Fifth was one launched out of

anger.

Even if Qing Shui could defeat the “Flower Crusher”, there was no way he could compare to Old Fifth.

Old Fifth was considered a strong expert in the Sky Prison. Even he himself didn’t know why he felt so infuriated to be looked down upon by this young lad.

This casual attack and the black fog on his palm, caused everyone to be on their toes, especially Mu Qing, Dong Yan, and Sun Yan. Mu Qing even closed her eyes, not daring to look at this situation.

Mu Qian didn’t blink, but his body swayed slightly. Mu Fengyang looked at Qing Shui. Although he didn’t move, his expression was especially solemn.

Qing Shui looked at the palm that was striking out towards him. To others, this palm strike appeared powerful and fatal, but to Qing Shui, it appeared to be very, very slow. He casually took a step forward.

Nine Palace Steps!

This step was very profound and mysterious, and few people present could tell that it was amazing. It made them feel astonished and speechless, as if they could only feel great admiration.

After taking one step forward, Qing Shui instantly raised his cultivation to its peak, lashing out with his right palm and striking the arm of the Sky Prison's Old Fifth.

Kacha...

The arm was completely mutilated and disappeared!

With a stifled grunt, the Sky Prison's Old Fifth spurted out fresh blood and fell into the crowd behind him before being caught by a few other old men.

Everyone was astonished and the majority of people had their mouths agape in great surprise. In that instant, their minds were completely blank. They had never expected this to happen.

It was as if time had completely come to a standstill, and it was so quiet that one could hear the sound of a needle dropping. Qing Shui was the only one who stood there, not feeling anything. He only felt that against someone like this, with a strength of about 150 stars, he could almost kill him instantly.

Moreover, he knew how powerful the Nine Palace Steps was. The Nine Palace Steps was pulled off almost perfectly in the attack earlier. When he performed the Nine Palace Steps, everything in his surroundings would be within his Nine Palace. He even could tap into the powers of Heaven and Earth to increase his speed and agility. Even a person who was of the same cultivation realm as Qing Shui wouldn't be able to hold a candle against him. This was how powerful the Nine Palace Steps was.

After a very long silence, it was as if there was an explosion.

“How is this possible?”

“How did this happen?”

...

People could tell from everyone’s astonished gazes that what they were seeing was real. They then looked towards that young man and the people from the Sky Prison Sect. The sudden turn of events caused them to be dumbfounded.

With her eyes closed, when Mu Qing heard the sound of contact, she was so nervous that she started trembling. However, what had followed after was silence. It was that silence that caused her to make up her mind to open her eyes, worried about what she would see.

When she opened her eyes and saw the scene before her, she thought her eyes were playing tricks on her. After verifying that it was real, she felt regretful that she had closed her eyes and missed out on seeing how Qing Shui had dealt the Sky Prison’s Old Fifth such a heavy blow.

Dong Yan and Sun Yan were also in a daze. They had not expected this outcome either. Right now, they were feeling surprised, great joy, and indescribable agitation.

The Sky Prison's Old Fifth got on his feet, looking at Qing Shui in great disbelief and horror, his earlier arrogance gone. He was unable to say anything.

As the few old men around him helped him apply medicine, they would occasionally glance at that young man in horror.

After crippling the Sky Prison's Old Fifth in one move, even if he had been too careless and had not shown off his full prowess earlier, to be able to destroy his arm completely required a substantial amount of power.

“Use formations to kill him! Kill him!”

Suddenly, the Sky Prison's Old Fifth shouted out. His face was pale as he looked at Qing Shui in horror.

“Formation? You mean that formation behind you? Can that rubbish be called a formation?” Qing Shui looked at them in disdain before taking out a small flag.

“Let me show you what a real formation is.”

Qing Shui spoke as he casually threw out the flag. The opponents started moving and surrounding Qing Shui. However, Qing Shui threw out the small flags in his hands slowly as he easily dodged their attacks.

Having practiced creating the Duality Minutest Formation in the Realm of the Violet Jade Immortal multiple times, he was able to recreate it very quickly. When the last small flag landed, the formation was activated.

This was the Mu Clan's front courtyard and the space was very wide. Moreover, the Duality Minutest Formation which Qing Clan had set up was very small. After all, there were not many opponents and they were all gathered together. Therefore, he could quickly make use of formations to bind his opponents.

Qing Shui just so happened to be standing outside the formation, causing everyone else to be stunned. It was only now that they were able to see the formation, since from the outside they couldn't really understand the formation earlier.

Now, they could see that the people from the Sky Prison Sect were in huge chaos, feeling horrified as they were constantly being injured. Although the severity of the injuries varied, some were so heavy that three had even died.

From outside the formation, all this appeared to look very funny, but now, none of them felt humored. They only felt horrified. In this moment, Qing Shui appeared to be very strange to everyone present, including Dong Yan, Sun Yan, and Mu Qing.

He really had the right to say that the formation the Flower Crusher had formed was some lousy thing...

With a flash, Qing Shui entered the formation, moving with

great ease like a fish in water as he used the Duality Steps. When Mu Qing saw this, she was extremely stunned. It was also then that she noticed that Qing Shui was using the Duality Minutest Formation that he had taught her before.

AST 905 – Ability Of A Grade One Martial Emperor, Preparation

Mu Qing was stunned. She had also been studying this Duality Step recently, as well as the Duality Minutest Formation. However, she had never expected that the formation would have such a great killing prowess.

And those flags... He seemed to have told her about them before. Mu Qing seriously looked at Qing Shui's each and every action and took note of the positions that Qing Shui had placed the flags.

She might be the only one who could understand this formation. Now that she had witnessed it for herself, she had the feeling as if it was 'deeply engraved' into her. In just this short moment, she had learned too many things.

Her heart was in an even greater mess now. She recalled the time when they had parted in the Sky Penetrating Mountains. Granny had said that he might soar and reach great success very soon.

He had really soared to great success. She felt very happy from the bottom of her heart. His earlier calmness must have been because he had great confidence. He probably chose not to speak up about it because he feared that she would be worried...

...

After entering the formation, Qing Shui darted about, injuring

the people from the Sky Prison Sect. Everywhere he passed, people would collapse in a flash. Qing Shui took this opportunity to retrieve his flags.

The formation was scattered!

Qing Shui didn't kill all those people but they were practically crippled and could only live as an ordinary person in the future. However, whether they would be able to accept living a life like this was another matter.

Everything returned to how it was previously. To the people outside the formation, there weren't any changes, and the only thing different was the absence of those small flags. However, to the people from the Sky Prison Sect, there had been tremendous changes.

Formation... To think that this young man also knew about formations. Moreover, it seemed that the formation he knew was even more powerful than the Sky Prison Sect's formation...

"The reason I didn't kill you guys is so that you can bring back a message to the Sky Prison Sect. Formations are not invincible. Once the opponent can find the trick behind the formation, it would become like a piece of paper, broken with just one stab. I don't know if the Sky Prison Sect can still be so arrogant without your formation." Qing Shui said as he now looked at that shrunken Sky Prison's Old Fifth.

The people from the Sky Prison Sect left. No one else said

anything.

These people were all crippled and they were of no threat to them. Moreover, they would still have to deal with the other experts from the Sky Prison Sect. Qing Shui hadn't planned on wiping them out. There was no need to do so.

The people from the Sky Prison Sect left and even the corpses of those who died were brought away. The people who remained were all extremely happy and some of them even saw hope.

They saw hope for the Mu Clan, with Mu Qing being the linchpin.

The Sky Prison Sect's formidability stemmed from the Sky Prison Sabre Technique, their formations, and the like. Without these advantages, the Sky Prison Sect's prowess would be weakened by many folds. Right now, this young man had the ability to rid the Sky Prison Sect of one of their advantages. If he was willing to help the Mu Clan, then the Mu Clan wouldn't have to be scared of anyone in the future.

Everyone was also curious what Qing Shui's cultivation realm. To be able to cripple Sky Prison's Old Fifth in a single move... How many people in the Mu Clan could actually pull this feat off?

Qing Shui turned back. Mu Fengyang and the few old men, Mu Qian and the others, Dong Yan, Sun Yan, Mu Qing and her siblings. They were all looking at him from a short distance away.

There was a gratified smile on Mu Fengyang's face. Although they were astonished, they were all very happy, especially when they're looking at Mu Qing. They all had their own set of thoughts. They had seen clearly the actions between Mu Qing and Qing Shui earlier.

It could be said that a large part of the reason that Mu Qian had tried to protect Qing Shui was because he was the man that his daughter had taken a liking to. Now, he realized that it was only a young man like this who could be a match for his daughter and could make his daughter fall for him.

“Old Master, Uncle, I was the cause of this problem. I'll get this settled before I leave.” Qing Shui smiled and said to the people of the Mu Clan.

“Qing Shui, what are you saying? Although our Mu Clan might not be that strong, as long as we are around, we can't let our friends suffer from any injustice,” said Mu Fengyang seriously as he looked at Qing Shui.

Qing Shui looked at this old man. he should be the main pillar for this branch of the Mu Clan, he was Mu Qing's grandfather. He had a strength that was slightly over 300 stars. In a clan like this, a person of his abilities was already considered to be at his max—Early Martial Emperor.

“Qing Shui!” Mu Qing called to Qing Shui.

Qing Shui looked toward her and noticed that there was joy in

that pair of worried, beautiful eyes. However, she didn't say anything more.

“Alright, let's go in, let's go in. Today was a good day!” Mu Fengyang said happily.

The group headed for the hall but many of them left automatically. A lot of them weren't that important enough to be present on an occasion like this. Moreover, this was the branch Mu Qian led.

Or rather, it was the primary branch!

This was Mu Fengyang's branch, but Mu Fengyang had quite a number of children. Mu Qian's father had died early, but Mu Qian had proven himself well. Although there weren't many people here now, their abilities weren't to be underestimated. His siblings were all quite strong too and thus this was considered the primary branch. It was a pity that Mu Qing was a woman, otherwise, it would be even more lively.

There were only slightly more than ten people in the group. The four old men, Mu Qian, Mu Qing, Qing Shui, Dong Yan, Sun Yan, and Mu Qing's elder brother—Mu Ying.

Mu Qian's strength was close to 100 stars and that was the reason why Qing Shui had paid attention to him. After knowing how strong Mu Fengyang and the few old men next to him were, he knew that Mu Ying, with his strength of around 100 stars, was also considerably powerful in the Mu Clan.

The reason they had gathered together was primarily to discuss the issue of the Sky Prison Sect. Of course, they would also talk about Qing Shui. These old men were all very shrewd and wouldn't ask Qing Shui any questions that he would find hard to answer.

They knew that if Qing Shui wanted to say certain things, they wouldn't have to ask. By the same token, if he didn't wish to share, he wouldn't say anything even if he was asked. Maybe it was because everyone was in a good mood that they ended up having an enjoyable chat.

Mu Qing had sat right next to Qing Shui. When they all took their seats, everyone had a mutual understanding to let Qing Shui and Mu Qing sit next to each other. Qing Shui didn't know what to feel.

To be able to sit next to a beauty and a lady of unparalleled beauty at that... Qing Shui felt that it was very strange. When he was very weak, it was so hard to woo even a single lady. It was just like how he had faced great obstacles back with Shi Qingzhuang in the past. The Situ Clan alone was a great obstacle to him back then. Without power, it would be but a wild wish for him to be able to stay together with her until they were to grow old.

Power was good. A strong cultivation wouldn't just strengthen the body, it could also strengthen one's soul and confidence. Even one's charms would increase as well.

Now, Qing Shui didn't know what to feel. When he looked at Mu Qing, his feelings toward her were still the same. However, he felt

that their relationship was more cordial now, a stark contrast to how unattainable she felt when they had first met. Back then, she was just like the stars in the sky.

Since there were no outsiders here, Qing Shui gave it some thought before asking Mu Fengyang, “Old Master, what determines if you’re a Grade One Martial Emperor?”

Mu Fengyang was stunned for a short while before he smiled and said, “As long as you’re able to reach a strength of 100 stars with just your physical strength and your martial techniques, you can be considered a Grade One Martial Emperor. Every time you rise up one grade, you’ll gain a strength of 1,000 stars. I only know that this is the case for the first five grades. A Grade Five Martial Emperor has a strength of 5,000 stars. I don’t know about the grades after that.” Mu Fengyang smiled and said.

For the first five grades in the Martial Emperor realm, each additional grade provided a difference of 1,000 stars. When one’s strength reached a certain level, grades no longer meant anything, strength was more determined by one’s abilities. Grades were just an empty title, strength in terms of stars was a more reliable method of judging one’s strength.

Qing Shui’s physical strength was at 40 stars and with the enhancements from Diamond Qi and Diamond Protection, it would be at 80 stars. If he were to add on his other martial techniques he would have long exceeded 100 stars. This was before he even relied on any external items.

After hearing this, Qing Shui sort of had an idea. He and his Five-

Headed Demonic Spider were both Grade One Martial Emperors, while that Long-armed Vicious Monkey King might be a Peak Grade One Martial Emperor that had a strength of around 1,000 stars.

Right now, he would have no problems defeating it by weakening it and with his Nine Palace Steps. Although his understanding of the Martial Emperor realm was only up to about 5,000 stars, he felt that many things were much clearer—at least for now.

“Old Master, how strong is the strongest person in the Sky Prison Sect? Do you have any idea?” Qing Shui asked Mu Fengyang. He was especially concerned about this. Right now, he wasn’t sure how strong the experts in the sects and clans in this city were. However, after seeing Mu Fengyang’s cultivation, he heaved a sigh of relief. He thought that they shouldn’t be too much stronger, especially since the Sky Prison Sect mainly relied on formations to become powerful.

“The Sovereign of the Sky Prison Sect relies primarily on formations. However, the experts in the Sky Prison Sect are still quite powerful. Two of them have a strength of about 1,000 stars. As for whether there are any other hidden experts, I’m not very sure. However, I think there shouldn’t be any. Otherwise, they wouldn’t be giving in to our Mu Clan.” Mu Fengyang gave it some thought before replying.

The strength of about 1,000 stars... This was a level which Qing Shui could accept. The formations they relied on shouldn’t be of much use against him. Although he has yet to succeed in the Nine Palace Eight Trigrams Formation, it was sufficient for him to rely

on the Nine Palace Eight Trigrams Formation and the Duality Minutest Formation.

Despite this, Qing Shui was still a bit worried about the opponent's formations. Although all the formations in the world were based off the Nine Palace and the Eight Trigrams, there were also many mysteries across different formations. There were even formations which were extremely vicious and made use of some devilish items. With the Sky Prison Sect having such a long legacy, Qing Shui didn't believe that they had no hidden tricks up their sleeves. The crux was whether their hidden tricks were strong enough.

This was also what Qing Shui was worried about. Before the Sky Prison Sect came again, Qing Shui needed to study formations and the Nine Palace Steps well. With that, he should be able to protect himself. As long as he could protect himself, Qing Shui had the confidence of breaking their formations.

If they dared to use some powerful and vicious formations to try and kill him, Qing Shui wouldn't mind killing those old fogeys. Qing Shui felt that he should still be able to kill those who were about the strength of 1,000 stars.

What kind of person was Mu Fengyang? Of course, he could tell what Qing Shui was thinking and thus he smiled and said, "The people from the Sky Prison Sect who are coming might be stronger than we expect. Therefore, we must be fully prepared. This time around, we'll listen to what you say."

These words weighed a lot. Everyone was surprised that Mu

Fengyang would say this. How powerful was this young man? However, after recalling that he had a good command of that strange formation, they no longer felt as astonished.

Qing Shui knew that this old man must have sensed that he was stronger. The old man wasn't able to clearly sense Qing Shui's cultivation but he probably had a vague idea. It was because Qing Shui could easily cripple Sky Prison's Old Fifth with just one move. Moreover, Qing Shui still had his formations.

"Thank you, Old Master!" Qing Shui expressed his thanks. He didn't wish to involve the Mu Clan in this since he could attack and retreat as he wished. As long as he was fine and didn't get the Mu Clan involved, they probably wouldn't dare to do anything to Mu Clan either.

Moreover, Qing Shui wanted to strengthen Mu Qing's cultivation of formations. Even if he were to eradicate all the strong experts from the Sky Prison Sect, inevitably there might be people who manage to slip away. Moreover, he had never thought of wiping them out all of them. However, even if he were to let some of them go, Qing Shui wanted to make sure that they had no means of retaliating. Only Mu Qing's mastery of formations and the Nine Palace Steps was crucial, everything else was unimportant.

AST 906 – Eve, Jade Spirit Fruit Ripened

By the time Qing Shui and Mu Qing had left the great hall, it was late in the morning. Dong Yan and Sun Yan had already disappeared somewhere long ago as they didn't wish to interrupt Qing Shui and Mu Qing.

Unfortunately, they didn't know that Qing Shui's relationship with Mu Qing hadn't reached that point yet. They could only be considered good friends.

“Qing Shui, I suddenly feel that you are growing more and more unfamiliar,” as Mu Qing walked, she looked at Qing Shui and smiled. Her bright eyes gave off a bewitching air.

“How could that be? I am still the same person and forever will be,” Qing Shui replied with a smile and looked at Mu Qing.

When she saw Qing Shui's smile, Mu Qing felt a little flustered, especially when she thought of what happened on that day. At that moment, she felt extremely flustered. She wasn't sure about her feelings towards Qing Shui.

Originally, she was already very curious about Qing Shui. However, he now seemed like an unsolvable puzzle. This made her urge to try and understand him grow stronger.

“Let me teach you about formations,” Qing Shui said after thinking for awhile. He felt that it was time to tell her a little about formations and for her to come into contact with them. This

was because she was capable of learning formations now.

Mu Qing stared blankly for a while before she smiled, “Fine, I am actually getting more and more curious about formations.”

Mu Qing actually had her own reasons for saying this. After she saw the might of formations, she actually stopped asking Qing Shui to teach her. In the past, she wanted to learn formations from Qing Shui to deal with the Sky Prison Sect. She had assumed that Qing Shui’s formation skills were very superficial and weren’t important to him.

She didn’t expect that Qing Shui’s formation skills would be much more formidable than the Sky Prison Sect’s. Thus, she felt that she was too rude in the past. However, since he now took the initiative to teach her formations she actually felt very happy. It wasn’t because she could learn more about formations, but it was because Qing Shui was willing to teach her.

Even an intelligent woman would have a simple side to them. Qing Shui had never expected this. Seeing that Mu Qing was happy, they headed towards her manor.

“Qing Shui, do you think that the people of the Sky Prison Sect will come soon?” Mu Qing asked as she walked. She was very calm when she asked this. Her calmness should be due to a change in her mentality

“They should be coming soon. If it was someone else, they would definitely try to rush over as soon as possible,” Qing Shui said after

he thought for awhile.

Mu Qing felt a little worried. When the two of them walked into the manor, Qing Shui stopped and called out to Mu Qing, “It is still early, we will do it here.”

Qing Shui first got Mu Qing to draw a simple Nine Palace Eight Trigrams. Then he got her to draw the Duality Minutest Formation’s position and its supporting position in sequence.

Mu Qing had built up a solid foundation during these days. She was quite fast and persistent. She would continually correct her own mistakes and identify the key points.

Qing Shui felt that Mu Qing had a treasure but he didn’t know what it was. However, he estimated that it was even more precious than the Spirit Concentrating Pill. He felt that her treasure could even be used together with the Spirit Concentrating Pill.

Almost everyone who could reach such a level at such an age had treasures on them. Even if they didn’t own treasures, their items wouldn’t be too bad either.

Although formations looked simple on the surface, its internal workings were full of variables. This kind of thing required a long time to research. Qing Shui had only grasped a single path in the art of formations. It would require a shocking amount of time to completely research formations. This was similar to the principle that it was possible to understand and apply some principles but not know where it came from.

Without realizing it, it was already noon. A lot of people from the Dong Clan came. This time, they planned to stand together with the Mu Clan and resist the Sky Prison Sect.

The one leading the Dong Clan was Dong Yan's grandfather. Qing Shui knew about the abilities of this old man. He was at the level of 80 stars. It seems that the Dong Clan was somewhat inferior to the Mu Clan. Despite this, Qing Shui felt happy.

With such level of abilities, it would be difficult for them make such a decision. It wasn't important if they took action because Dong Yan rallied them or they volunteered. The most important person was Dong Yan. It was enough just having him.

Even though the Dong Clan came, they wouldn't be of much help in this case. However, there was strength in numbers. At the very least, having more people would strengthen their courage and the atmosphere wouldn't be as worrying as it was before.

In the afternoon, Qing Shui still continued to practice formations with Mu Qing. When he had spare time, Qing Shui started to use those small formation flags to lay down formations in the Mu Clan's yard. He had basically surrounded the entire Mu Clan with formations. Additionally, he accumulated many flags in the Realm of the Violet Jade Immortal.

Qing Shui used the Duality Minutest Formation to intersect the interior and the exterior of the Mu Clan. He had also taken out the Five Elements Minor Formation for the few old men to research.

During this period of time, Dong Yan and Sun Yan had learned a lot. They were able to assemble and coordinate the formation.

The individuals who accompanied Mu Qing when she headed into the Sky Penetrating Mountains were now at a crucial moment with their practice of the Five Elements Minor Formation. The formation master of the Five Elements Minor Formation had cooperated with the 20 old men that had been together for many years and had a tacit understanding of each other. Thus, they were able to easily reach their current achievements. At the same time, they practiced walking around in the Duality Minutest Formation. Qing Shui had them practice this as a precaution.

Time slowly went by. Qing Shui noticed that the Duality Minutest Formation had already been laid everywhere. He also saw the key figures of the Mu Clan learning how to cooperate while using the Duality Steps and the Five Elements Minor Formation. If everyone was able to cooperate together when the time came, their might would be increased very significantly.

To connect these people together, every group of them would have two to three experts in charge. Furthermore, when everyone was together, they would be able to look after each other. Since they found out about Qing Shui's strength, the people who were learning the formation put in their best efforts.

Even those people who had tried to bully Qing Shui forgot about their motives. Back then, they thought that Qing Shui was an idiot. Thus, they had hoped that Young Master Yin would kill him.

However, now they knew that Qing Shui was a heaven defying

genius. Within the whole World of the Nine Continents, there were only a few of these demon-level characters. If they knew about his talent earlier, they wouldn't have to blindly mull over this. In retrospect, it was silly of them to plot against Qing Shui.

When humans were desperate, their potential would become limitless. The Mu Clan's current situation could be considered extremely dangerous. If they weren't careful, their roots might get torn out.

No one would want their clan to fall. At this time, the Mu Clan was very easily unified. Thus, their speed of improvement was much faster than before by many folds.

Mu Qing was no exception. Originally, her talent was pretty great. Now, with a good foundation and her efforts, she was the one who learned the fastest.

The sky slowly turned dark but the people from the Sky Prison Sect hadn't appeared yet. This was normal. Old Wu and his group probably hadn't even reached the Sky Prison Sect yet.

Thus, it was more likely that they would arrive two days later. They could still enjoy two more days of peace.

.....

In a splendorous and majestic mansion within the country's capital, there was a youth whose hand was wrapped in bandages.

There was also a really sturdy man in his prime, he was about two meters tall.

“Stop thinking of revenge, regardless of whether the Mu Clan can survive this ordeal, stop thinking about revenge,” the man sighed and said to the youth on the bed.

“I hope that the Sky Prison Sect will obliterate them all, especially that fellow.....”

The man sighed and left the room. Originally, he had wanted to go to the Mu Clan and argue with them because of his son's injuries. After all, his son was crippled, how could he take it lying down as his father? He had even planned on making a big scene at the Mu Clan.

However, his influence was no longer needed. If the Mu Clan was destroyed by the Sky Prison Sect, they naturally didn't have to do anything. At best, they would just cause some trouble while they were down. On the other hand, if the Mu Clan succeeded, then there would be no need to send themselves to die.

However, seeing his son in this state, he felt very upset as his father. The Yin Clan was a privileged clan around these parts but they were now forced to just tolerate this.

.....

It was night when Qing Shui entered the Realm of the Violet Jade

Immortal and headed towards the Jade Spirit Fruit Tree. It was about time for it to ripen.

It was ripe!

The fragrance of the snow white Jade Spirit fruit was filled with spirituality that could be smelt from afar. There was a total of 100 fruits. Qing Shui still wasn't very sure about the effects of the Jade Spirit Fruit.

He then picked all of the Jade Spirit Fruit. After hesitating for a while, Qing Shui chose one and ate it. It was very fragrant and slightly sweet. The most important part was that it had a refreshing taste.

After he ate it, his whole body felt cleansed and it felt very good. However, after awhile, Qing Shui realized that there were no effects. His abilities hadn't changed. However, he could sense that his marrows had transformed slightly.

Transformation of marrows?

Qing Shui didn't give up and ate another one. This time, Qing Shui was stunned. He gained half a star of abilities. The transformation of one's marrows could actually increase one's abilities?

Thinking of the Snow Lion King that protected the Jade Spirit Fruit, Qing Shui summoned his demonic beasts. He wanted to see

what effects this Jade Spirit Fruit had on them.

Every demonic beast ate two of the fruits.

After that, he quietly waited and watched the surrounding demonic beasts. At this point of time, he only knew that the Jade Spirit Fruit could improve the marrows.

After they ate it, Qing Shui was taken aback. There were some changes but they were all minute. The Gold-Silver Colored Butterfly and the Ten Thousand Poisonous Violet Sable's abilities seemed to increase significantly.

Qing Shui still hadn't given up and fed each of his demonic beast five Jade Spirit Fruit. If there still weren't any obvious effects, then Qing Shui was prepared to eat all of the fruits himself. At least, his abilities would have some increase.

This time, there were some obvious effects. There was an obvious change in their marrows. The level of abilities gained was also very visible and their abilities were increased by nearly 10%.

The Five-Headed Demonic Spider had the abilities of 400 stars. This time, its abilities actually increased by 40 stars...

This Jade Spirit Fruit was actually able to increase the abilities of a Martial Emperor by this much? There didn't seem to be any cultivation limit. It was a pity that it only increased the consumer's abilities by 10%. However, why was the Snow Lion

King defending it to the bitter end if it was just so simple?

It definitely shouldn't be just for this 10% increase in abilities. This 10% increase was definitely just a supplementary effect.

After the Five-Headed Demonic Spider quietened down, it didn't experience any more changes. The Gold-Silver Colored Butterfly and the Ten Thousand Poisonous Violet Sable also gained a 10% increase in abilities before stopping. Finally, Qing Shui cast his gaze on the Diamond Gigantic Elephant and the Fire Bird.

AST 907 – Yet Another Twenty Stars Increase, Dragon Elephant Force, Dark Phoenix Of Nine Heavens

At the moment, Qing Shui was at a loss. Forget about the other demonic beasts that didn't undergo any changes, the Five-Headed Demonic Spider was a very formidable beast, even though its increase in strength was quite significant, it still felt like it had barely achieved that.

Suddenly, Qing Shui remembered the Snow Lion King, a demonic beast which already had the strength of a Peak Martial Saint. Could it be that it wanted to break through to Martial Emperor using the Jade Spirit Fruit?

Qing Shui was puzzled. He himself has already eaten a few of them. He felt that even though it was quite decent in terms of boosting strength, its effect would gradually fall dependant on the amount that he consumed. He estimated it would lose effect once he ate ten of them. However, it could help change body physique and bones, it was just that its effect would also decrease progressively. A 10% increase in strength was already quite decent. The strength stated here was talking about the strength which didn't rely on any external factors. It included the raw strength and techniques. In one go, Qing Shui's raw strength actually increased by twenty stars and achieved a total of sixty stars.

To Qing Shui, twenty stars was still really heaven-defying, it was already worth it!

Could it be that this was a Spirit Fruit for awakening innate skills and blood vessels? To think that such good stuff would be seized by a Peak Martial Saint Demonic Beast.

Qing Shui remembered his Beast Pill. Could the effect of Jade Spirit Fruit be similar to that of a Beast Pill? Just that it's more suitable for powerful demonic beasts and warriors but then, why would it not have any effect on the Five-Headed Demonic Spider? And it seemed to be useless with the other demonic beasts as well.

Did it have to do with their species?

The Diamond Gigantic Elephant was evolved from the Diamond Demonic Boar. It had already awakened its innate skills and blood veins. Could it be that it could still awaken it for a second and third time?

Suddenly, the Fire Bird let out an ear-splitting chirp.

Jet-black flame flourished all over its body.

Qing Shui stared at the Fire Bird that was growing more mighty in the air. He felt excited in his heart, it seemed that its bloodline had been awakened by a significant amount. Even if the Fire Bird had the bloodline of the legendary phoenix, there was still a long way to go before completely awakening it.

He remembered the Roc Form. The ability of the Golden Winged Roc was really powerful. Merely from the earliest "Heart of Roc"

and “Roc Spreading Wings”, he could already tell that it was more powerful than the Five-Headed Demonic Spider while the Dragon and Phoenix Forms were above that of the Roc Form.

Since ancient times, both the phoenix and dragons represented peace. Dragons were the king of all beasts whereas the phoenix was the king of flying beasts. The legendary roc was actually also the descendant of the phoenix. Their bodies would contain a huge amount of phoenix blood veins.

At the moment when jet-black flame flourished all across the Fire Bird’s body, golden light also shone on the Diamond Gigantic Elephant’s body. This caused Qing Shui to feel a bit surprised as he originally thought that there would no longer be any changes to the Diamond Gigantic Elephant.

The Diamond Gigantic Elephant was evolved from the Diamond Demonic Boar as a result of it completing its Innate Skills and Blood Veins Awakening, could it be that it was going to go through yet another awakening? Just to what extent could it evolve?

But Qing Shui was really happy. It was fine as long as it could awaken. It also didn’t matter what it awakened. In any case, once it went through an awakening, it would experience a significant strength boost. This was more powerful than ordinary breakthroughs. He was looking forward to seeing to what extent its strength would reach in a while.

Kong-kong!

Minggg!

Qing Shui could tell that there seemed to be a kind of firm tone which resembled that of a dragon moaning noise within the Diamond Gigantic Elephant's howl. The noise itself sounded really beautiful to the point that it could shake one to their core.

The chirping noise of the Fire Bird on the other hand, became clearer and clearer. The noise sounded so sharp that it felt like it was going to penetrate through the blue dome of heaven. Despite never hearing the actual chirping noise of a phoenix before, Qing Shui felt that it already resembled it. He thought that it resembled a bit of what was referred and described as a phoenix chirping noise based on his previous incarnation. Nevertheless, it was still quite different compared to what he was hearing now. This kind of phoenix chirping noise sounded really pleasant, it was a pleasurable experience.

It kept going on for roughly the time of an incense stick. During this period of time, both the Diamond Gigantic Elephant and Fire Bird recovered back to their original states almost at the same time. There weren't many changes to the appearance of either of the demonic beasts, but if one was to observe closely they would notice that the neck of the Diamond Gigantic Elephant had become longer and its body resembled metal even more than before. It also appeared to look slightly swollen.

The color of the Fire Bird got even darker, this time, there was no longer anyone who said that the Fire Bird was colored red. In the past, it was scarlet red but now, it had turned to scarlet black. Judging from the trend, it might eventually turn out to be a jet-

black colored Black Phoenix.

Qing Shui released his Spiritual Sense to analyze the strength of both the Diamond Gigantic Elephant and Fire Bird. Originally, the strength of the Diamond Gigantic Elephant was really close to reaching a star but now it jumped straight to achieving a total of three stars. Looking at the slightly extended neck, Qing Shui was quite confused as to what innate skills and blood veins the Diamond Gigantic Elephant possessed. Could it be dragon? He shook his head, in any case, Qing Shui found it really hard to believe as it didn't resemble one even a bit.

Three stars worth of raw strength, when under the effect of Diamond Sword Qi, Diamond Protection and other passive battle techniques, it would immediately achieve six stars worth of strength. What made Qing Shui upset was that both the offensive and defensive strength of the Diamond Gigantic Elephant had synchronized. They both had three stars worth of raw strength. He was unable to comprehend it, could it be that it would achieve a balanced state of strength once it reached a certain level?

Qing Shui looked towards the Diamond Gigantic Elephant's battle technique only to be dumbfounded. Diamond Qi, Diamond Protection and Diamond Crossing Rivers were all gone. In exchange, it got a new battle technique instead, a passive battle technique.

Dragon Elephant Force, passive battle technique, permanently increase raw strength threefold. In this case, the Diamond Gigantic Elephant would achieve a total strength of ten stars. Furthermore, it was when it hadn't used any battle techniques.

Dragon Elephant Force, Qing Shui was confused for a long time. He once again looked at the current Diamond Gigantic Elephant and found that it truly has become different from before. Its neck had become a bit longer. If one was to observe it from further away, it would be much more obvious.

Dragon Elephant Force. Was this ability trying to reveal something? It's just like when the Fire Bird's battle technique mentioned the word "Black Phoenix" but could the "Dragon Elephant" be a type of species?

After that, Qing Shui continued looking downwards. The ability Instantaneous Diamond Evasion got upgraded. It could instantly rush in and kill enemies within five hundred meters. However, Qing Shui felt that this ability wasn't anything significant when used against a Martial Emperor since five hundred meters was already a range which Qing Shui could travel instantly. Now that he had perfected his Nine Palace Steps, this was even more worthless. But when used against warriors below that of Martial Emperors, it was still quite insane.

The Diamond Sword Qi was still the same as before, it could lock onto the target and was unavoidable. But the opponent could try to block or resist against it. Under the state of Diamond Sword Qi, the attack of Diamond Ferocious Attack would multiply.

Diamond Ferocious Attack could originally already increase the offensive strength by one fold. Under the situation when the target also got marked by the Diamond Sword Qi, it could immediately be raised to four times the original offensive strength.

Mighty Elephant's Recklessness, twofold of the same offensive attack. It could target at most ten opponents.

"Yeah, it became a group attack, so it's more like a technique used to open up paths."

Mighty Elephant Stomp, Great Perfection Stage, ten times the raw offensive strength.

Qing Shui smiled as he finished reading through all the battle techniques of the Diamond Gigantic Elephant. If he didn't break through himself, the current Diamond Gigantic Elephant would most likely be his strongest powerhouse. After all, the Mighty Elephant Stomp could achieve an offensive strength of thirty stars.

But now, because the Diamond Gigantic Elephant's raw strength wasn't powerful enough, its current most powerful single kill has become stacking the Diamond Ferocious Attack on top of Diamond Sword Qi. It could achieve a total of thirty six stars of offensive strength while the opponent could only try to block and resist against it. It couldn't be avoided and was strong enough. Unfortunately, it couldn't be of much use under the current circumstances.

But Qing Shui was already satisfied with what he had. This was a good beginning. The Diamond Gigantic Elephant awakened its Dragon Elephant Force. Even though in his mind, Qing Shui found that the ability of the Diamond Gigantic Elephant was really heaven-defying how long would this last? Some people were born

to be ordinary whereas some could just cover up the entire sky with one hand, the same thing should also apply for the Diamond Gigantic Elephant, some should be incomparably strong whereas some should only be normal.

Qing Shui had a feeling that the Diamond Gigantic Elephant might really attain the ability to battle the heaven and earth.

He turned around and looked towards the Fire Bird which was still flying in the sky. He leaped onto the Fire Bird's back. The Fire Bird's raw strength, which was originally one and a half stars had now achieved four stars.

All along, Qing Shui had always felt that the Fire Bird's ability wasn't that strong. Only now did he feel that the Fire Bird should have become slightly more powerful. He eagerly read through the Fire Bird's Battle Techniques.

Dark Phoenix of Nine Heavens: Passive battle technique, zero consumption, permanently increase raw strength fourfold. All of the battle techniques' consumptions would be cut in half.

"Changed, it also changed. Is the Jade Spirited Fruit really that strong? Then the Snow Lion King was very likely to break through to the Martial Emperor Grade using the Jade Spirited Fruit. It's such a waste." Qing Shui let out a sigh.

Superior Flight: The unique flying ability only known by the Fire Bird. Both its endurance and speed were incomparable. It was one of the top techniques among all the flying type demonic beasts.

Capable of flying at high speed for a long period of time.

Hell's Inferno: The Fire Bird executed a formidable flame attack. The dark flame could burn away everything. It contained terrifying destructive ability. Legend has it that it was one of the powerful battle techniques of Black Phoenix.

Phoenix Dance of Nine Heavens: When the Fire Bird used the Phoenix Dance of Nine Heavens, its flame attack's damage would multiply. This would last for thirty minutes. It could be used four times a day. During this time, the damage it received would be cut in half.

The number of times allowed to use it in a day doubled. Other than that, nothing really changed. These weren't actually that important.

Qing Shui moved his gaze to the last battle technique, the Phoenix Paradise.

Phoenix Paradise, at the time when the Fire Bird received critical damage, there was a 30% chance it would go through Firebath Rebirth. Once it succeeded in rebirthing, it would be as if it went through a metamorphosis and its strength would double.

Under the state of Dark Phoenix of Nine Heavens, the Fire Bird would achieve a strength of sixteen stars whereas under the state of Phoenix Dance of the Nine Heavens, it would be thirty-two stars. Most importantly, at present, Qing Shui still had a really powerful item, the Spirit Gathering Lamp.

The Spirit Gathering Lamp could now double the damage dealt by the Fire Bird's flame attacks, that being sixty four stars.

The mighty Spirit Gathering Lamp, Qing Shui was now really happy. Unfortunately, the progression made by it as of now was really slow. However, it shouldn't be too far away from ascending a grade. It had been a long time since it leveled up.

Qing Shui jumped off the Fire Bird's back, feeling really satisfied. At such a crucial point, the power boost of the Demonic Beast was really important. Even though the effect wasn't that significant against formidable foes, the majority of warriors in Sky Prison Sect should most likely be ordinary warriors. How many Martial Emperors could there possibly be? Hence, the Diamond Gigantic Elephant, Fire Bird and the other demonic beasts of his were still really powerful.

This time, nothing happened to the Thunderous Beast. Qing Shui was determined to continue and fed it two more Jade Spirit Fruit. He noticed that things were still the same except he could sense that the Spiritual Qi within the Thunderous Beast felt really strong.

Seeing that there were not many Jade Spirit Fruits left, Qing Shui immediately put it away. The fruit seemed to have a really strong effect on people with unique blood veins. The blood vein of the Thunderous Beast was just Thunderous Beast. It might be that ordinary blood veins didn't contain any powerful species' blood veins, that was why it couldn't be awakened.

As Qing Shui exited the Realm of the Violet Jade Immortal, he immediately laid down on his bed and slept. In the morning, he woke up on time and after going through a simple and quick shower, he walked out of his room. As he stepped out of the house, he could already see Mu Qing arranging a few stones in the courtyard.

Laying formations!

This woman was truly hard working. As Mu Qing saw Qing Shui coming out, she happily greeted him.

There would most likely be no one to bother them today. So they could enjoy a day of peace.

“How did it go?” Qing Shui walked up to her side with a smile and looked at the stones on the ground.

“It’s done but nothing is happening with the formation.” Mu Qing looked at Qing Shui with a bitter look.

“Move the Gan Position horizontally by three meters, the Gen Position up by half a meter, the eye of the formation in the southeast direction by a meter. At the time when you put down the stone of the supporting position, you need to use the hand motion that I told you about. It’s best if you could find stones with Spiritual Qi.” Qing Shui smiled as he passed the colored stone to Mu Qing.

Mu Qing happily nodded. After that, she rearranged things once more. Then, she placed the stone in her hand into the eye of the formation. Instantly, the Spiritual Qi surged and the formation activated.

Mu Qing stood within the formation excitedly. The surprised look on her face was indescribable, yet it still looked really beautiful as usual. The expression given out from her bright and beautiful pupils resembled that of the stars in the sky.

“Duality Steps, remember the usual practice.” Qing Shui charged towards Mu Qing within the formation.

Qing Shui seemed to have forgotten about the awkward feelings he had in the past, it might have been because he couldn't care much about it now. Mu Qing on the other hand, blushed. It seemed like she was also reminded of that time. She bit her lip and quickly avoided him. The technique she executed was a skilled Duality Steps.

Qing Shui spotted Mu Qing's expression, especially her action from before when she bit her lip and revealed her snow white teeth, it was breathtakingly beautiful.

Qing Shui shook his head and once again charged towards Mu Qing. During the entire process, he didn't stop pointing out to her the things which needed particular attention about formations and explained to her once more about the Sixth Gate and other details.....

AST 908 – Beauties Everywhere, Improvement, Worry

The two of them traveled back and forth inside the formation. Qing Shui continually used his Duality Steps to chase after Mu Qing, with his speed increasing and his movements turning craftier. Mu Qing kept avoiding, however, there was danger everywhere. If she made a wrong move, she would step onto the ‘Gate of Death’ and would encounter a lot of danger. It would be like a natural disaster with an unceasing attack.

Mu Qing was very serious at this moment, but she was very happy as well. With just a short period of time, her formation techniques had improved vastly. From learning how to place a formation, she was now able to move freely within it. Although it had only been slightly more than two hours, without any knack of it, this improvement might require tens of years.

This was an improvement, and also the source of Mu Qing’s joy!

After this round, she was incredibly familiar with the formation already. Qing Shui hesitated for a bit, then increased his strength and pushed her into the dangerous areas of the formation. Since he was around, he did not have to worry about Mu Qing getting injured.

However, once she was pushed in, a certain situation caught Qing Shui unprepared. Mu Qing suddenly cried out in surprise. That charming and graceful voice was clearly surprised but it was still extremely pleasing, it had a languid and attractive quality to it.

After that, Qing Shui felt Mu Qing tightly hugging him, followed by her horrified voice, “So many frogs.....”

Qing Shui took a look, the formation he entered was a poison formation. This was one of the Gate of Illusion of the Duality Minutest Formation. There were poisonous creatures everywhere – poisonous worms, poisonous snake and lot of colorful poisonous frogs. They look extremely disgusting that even a man would be frightened.

He held the woman in his embrace and with a flash, he appeared outside the formation, “Big Miss, its fine already, you can let me go now.”

Qing Shui had to tell her this first. After all, the people trapped in the formation would be scared silly, it was not a good time to explain things. Thus, he could only exit the formation first before letting her know that it was already a small success for her to be able to protect herself and attack the enemies.

Within the formation, there were areas that aimed to trap or kill the enemies. The first usage of the formation is to kill the enemy directly, the other was for the user of the formation to kill those who are trapped. Comparing the dangerous areas and the safe areas, it was easier for the user to take action in the dangerous areas. An example of a dangerous area would be one that had many poisonous creatures.

These poisonous creatures were only illusions but they would

feel like the real thing when they made direct contact. However, the victim would not be poisoned, this kind of attack mainly targeted the mind.

If they were surrounded and touched by these poisonous creatures, it would be a simple matter for these creatures to kill them. This was especially true to those poisonous creatures with cohesive nature.

Thus, they had to grasp the right way to avoid such areas or to not come into contact with these poisonous creatures.

“I won’t let go!”

An indolent female voice said. Mu Qing raised her head slightly and looked at Qing Shui. Her elegant eyes had a faint smiling expression and her white, jade-like face had a trace of a blush on it.

Qing Shui could tell that she was a little shy but her voice also had a trace of playfulness. However, he knew she was forcing herself, this was not her usual character. She was doing this to send him a message.

This probably took a great deal of courage and determination for her.

Qing Shui looked at the girl hugging his neck, her pretty face was just about 33 centimeters away with her body stuck closely onto his. Although it was cold, cultivators usually wore thin clothes. He

could faintly feel her body temperature through her phoenix skirt.

“Alright, don’t let the others see the apple of their eye behaving like this.” Qing Shui’s heart was beating quite fast, as he said this.

An absolute beauty that had a multifarious bearing was acting spoiled in his embrace. It would be a lie if he said he didn’t feel anything. However, he was not a playboy that would not let go a beauty when he saw one.

Still, Qing Shui had no idea what to do with this woman that delivered herself to him. It was easy to move a man’s heart, sometimes all it need was an instant.

Men and women were very similar at times but women tend to be more faithful to one person.

“Qing Shui!” Mu Qing’s heart was beating very fast, as she shouted out gently. This was the first time she daringly hugged a man. She was very nervous, she had never expected that such a day would come.

Qing Shui could naturally feel her heart beating fast. There was a shy expression on her pretty face, he could only use the word ‘breathtaking’ to describe it. Even when he had seen many pretty girls, he still lost his wits twice.

Mu Qing seemed very happy. She currently did not understand exactly how she felt, she only felt an unreal feeling.

“Miss Mu, have you truly fallen for me? How are you planning to fight for me, are you going to build a magnificent house for your lover?” Qing Shui shook his head and smiled at Mu Qing.

“What are you saying? Magnificent house...” The blush on Mu Qing’s face did not fade away after all this time.

“I have a very poor self-control. If you still don’t release me, I would no longer be able to control myself.” Qing Shui said seriously. However, he had a faint smile on his face. Despite that, his words were true. He hadn’t had any contact with the opposite gender for a while, Qing Shui was starting to feel a reaction in his body.

“Just hug me for awhile?” Mu Qing said with a gentle voice.

Qing Shui was stunned. Now that things had gotten to this stage, there was no need to shy away from this. He used some strength and carried her into his embrace until there was no longer a gap between their bodies. He could even feel the bounciness of her chest. However, he did not make any other moves.

Mu Qing moaned and raised her blushing face to look at Qing Shui. She looked extremely pretty.

“Girl, I already have wives. Furthermore, I would be leaving after this matter is over.” Qing Shui sighed.

“I know, for someone like you at your age, it wouldn’t be normal if you didn’t have any women. You told me before that you have wives already, and not just one.” Mu Qing smiled.

Qing Shui was stunned, he now remembered that he did tell her that before.

“You already know about it, then why are you still doing this?” He looked at Mu Qing in confusion, as he asked.

“Since young, this is the first time that I have any feelings for a man. Furthermore, I slowly found out that I have a strange feeling for you. I always want to see you, I feel that I like you. I wish to not lose this opportunity.” Mu Qing was still blushing, but she still said that to Qing Shui.

This could be considered a confession. She could be considered to have said it in person.

When a woman confesses, the man would feel proud. Furthermore, this was an absolute beauty. Qing Shui felt like doing it, but he did not want to do it. He felt very conflicted.

He did not love Mu Qing but he likes pretty girls. However, he did not have the intention of collecting pretty girls. The girls in his heart were more important than his own life. If his girls were in danger, he would go and save them regardless of the danger. Even if he could die, he would still go. All of the women he had, he would love and treasure them with all of his heart

After interacting with her for awhile, he had only felt that Miss Mu was a good girl. She could be considered as his good friend but they hadn't interacted for that long. However, he had enjoyed some benefits from her, regardless of how he felt, that feeling was priceless.

"I do not love you!" He sighed again.

Qing Shui felt that he had let her down by saying these words. He felt a bit guilty.

"If you said that you love me, you would not be Qing Shui. What I love about you is that you are willing to shoulder the responsibility of your actions..." she smiled before she gently released Qing Shui.

"It's time to let me go." Mu Qing touched his face and smiled.

"Casting me away after you are done with me?" Qing Shui smiled, as he let go.

"Go and die, who says things like this?" Although she did not have much interaction with men, that didn't mean that she understood nothing. There were still books about this after all, she could still understand Qing Shui's obscene words.

"The matter now is the most important, we can talk about the other stuff later. If you think about me until you can no longer restrain yourself, you can come and hug me. I will not charge you

any money.” Qing Shui was half lying. Looking at Miss Mu’s expression, he unconsciously teased her. This was because her expressions were extremely attractive.

“You scoundrel, don’t be so frivolous with me.” Mu Qing hammered on him and was slightly annoyed. She did not expect that this steady and earnest man could be so frivolous with her. She irritatedly glared at Qing Shui.

“I’m sorry, I did not have that kind of intentions.” Qing Shui apologized as he saw Mu Qing’s shy expression.

“Alright, just messing with you.” Mu Qing quickly smiled and said when she saw that Qing Shui felt guilty.

“Then let us continue. Very soon, you will be able to use this formation alone.”

Following that, he explained the positions of the formation to her once again, as well as how to deal with those poisonous creatures. He also explained the other situations of the formation to her before letting her go back into the formation to give it a try.

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At the same time, the other people in the Mu Clan were training continuously in the Duality Minutest Formation. There were Duality Minutest Formations placed everywhere. Only by training within this formation could they make use of it to protect

themselves and survive.

There was no need for them to place the formation, they only need to be familiar with moving around it or place the Five Elements Minor Formations. Right now, all of them were working on this, they temporarily cast everything else aside. Furthermore, learning these would ensure their survival in the future and would also improve their strength.

If they could get past this without any major damage, not only the Mu Clan, even the Dong Clan and the Sun Clan would become stronger as well. Furthermore, the relationship between the Mu Clan and the Dong Clan would be closer.

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Greencloud Continent!

A manor within the Heavenly Palace.

“Young lass, come here and give me a hug!”

Huiyun Liu-Li knelt down and stretched her hands out to a young girl. This was the daughter between her and Qing Shui. Now, she had already started walking but Qing Shui hadn't come back yet.

The young lass slowly took a step, when she saw that Huoyun Liu-Li was near, she leaped into her embrace. Her baby voice was very pleasing to the ear.

The smile on Huoyun Liu-Li's face was like a blossoming flower. She carried her daughter and looked into her large eyes and tender face. She stretched out her meaty hands to grab at her face.

“Lass, come and let aunt-mother carry you.” Canghai Mingyue said as she walked over and smiled before she received the young lass from Huoyun Liu-Li.

“Where are Zun`er and Yin`er?” Huoyun Liu-Li asked while smiling.

“I’m not sure where the two rascals have ran to. Are we really waiting for him to come back before we give her a name?” Canghai Mingyue smiled and asked.

“It wouldn’t be too late for a name, I just don’t know whether he is doing well or not. I just want to know how is he doing.” Huoyun Liu-Li was smiling, but her face still was full of worry.

“It has been such a long time, he should be coming back soon. With his abilities, he will be fine. Stop worrying.” Canghai Mingyue smiled as she said. Although she was consoling Liu-Li, she too had the same worries in her heart.

AST 909 – The Mu Clan’s Old Ancestor At His Late Days, Conversation

Huoyun Liu-Li and Canghai Mingyue were playing with the kids while talking in the front yard and most of their topics were centered around Qing Shui.

Maybe because the two women had given birth or maybe also because they were aging, the two now appeared to look even more graceful than before. They exuded a kind of noble and pure aura similar to that of Mingyue Gelou’s. This should have something to do with them being mothers.

After all, the two were already older than Qing Shui in terms of age to begin with. Now, Qing Shui was already someone who was more than thirty years old. Luckily, because the World of the Nine Continents was abundant with spiritual energy, people around thirty to forty years of age were considered to be young, especially in the case of warriors. When they truly became an adult at the age of sixteen, it was the stage in their lives when they would experience the fastest improvement in their cultivation, very few people would actually get married.

Some people chose to abstain due to fear of losing their vital essence, in other words, they chose to suppress their sexual desire. From Qing Shui’s perspective however, it was only necessary to have control over your sexual desire. Completely suppressing it wouldn’t benefit people with ordinary needs in any way.

The world was divided into Yin and Yang, so were humans. It was a law of nature that Yin and Yang would combine with each

other. Hence, Qing Shui wouldn't do something like that. To Qing Shui, he would prefer doing things by going with the flow and keeping a calm mind. When conditions were right, success would follow naturally, this was the right mindset for a cultivator to have.

Far away in the Eastern Victory Continent, Qing Shui was unaware that he just got himself yet another daughter.

“We haven't heard anything from Sister Chen since the last time she was gone.” After talking for a moment, Huoyun Liu-Li and Canghai Mingyue switched the topic to Di Chen.

“That's right. If Qing Shui was home, both Jiange and Luan Luan would most likely have left as well. They have said before that they wanted to leave. It's just that with Qing Shui not around, they were a bit concerned about what would happen to the family if they left,” Canghai Mingyue responded after hesitating a while.

“Sister Jiange seemed to be hiding a lot of secrets. I wonder if Qing Shui was aware of any of them,” Huoyun Liu-Li casually asked Canghai Mingyue.

“Alright, let's stop talking about these unpleasant things. Even if she leaves, she is still one of us. Hehe, one thing that's for sure is that she's Qing Shui's woman.” What Canghai Mingyue said previously was really profound. Huoyun Liu-Li puzzled over what she had said.

“Auntie!”

A slender and elegant woman with a high ponytail hairstyle shouted happily approaching Canghai Mingyue and Huoyun Liu-Li. Her footsteps were like flashing flames. Each movement performed by her feet was very relaxed and pleasant to look at. It was an indescribable feeling.

She was a lovely young woman with a joyful expression on her exquisite face. While shouting, she walked to the side of the two women. She extended her hands and twisted the little one's cheek.

“Luan Luan, don't you have anything to do today?” Canghai Mingyue smiled looking at Luan Luan.

This lady, who was now all grown up, was none other than Luan Luan. Her facial appearance had very little resemblance to Yiye Jiange's. Though very vaguely, the two shared a little similarity in terms of their charm. Overall, the auras that the two exuded were totally different.

Yiye Jiange was like a bottomless pond of water, whereas Luan Luan resembled more of a splashing river, with the former being outstandingly extraordinary and the latter being cheerful.

“I just finished two months of seclusion training but daddy doesn't seem to be back yet.” Luan Luan pouted while teasing the little one. She seemed to be really unsatisfied with the fact that Qing Shui wasn't back home.

“Your daddy couldn't have been tempted by the witch, could he?

If not, why hasn't he updated us with any news for so long?" Huoyun Liu-Li said smiling.

"Auntie, I feel that even witches will have to step down gracefully when they're in front of you. Daddy would definitely not be willing to part with you." Luan Luan revealed a sly smile.

"You damned rude brat, you actually tried to tease me," Huoyun Liu-Li blushed and responded.

Canghai Mingyue sat by the side. She didn't say anything, but only expressed a graceful and attractive smile.

After a while, Yuchang also joined in. The young lady who was slightly younger than Luan Luan now also looked graceful and subdued. She was like a lotus that had just blossomed. Different from Luan Luan and Yiye Jiange, her facial appearance had some resemblance to that of Mingyue Gelou. But when it came down to her talent, she could only be considered above average, almost the same as Qing You's and Qing Bei's.

Both Yu Chang and Luan Luan had grown up. Those who were aware of their origins didn't speak a word about it in front of them. Simultaneously, no one truly knew if they themselves were aware that they weren't blood-related to Qing Shui. Nonetheless, this was not of any importance. From the way things were now, it didn't really matter whether they were blood-related or not.

Perhaps, Yu Chang might still have very vague memories of the past. In the past, she was once taken away along with Mingyue

Gelou. She should have a few memories of the things that happened back then despite not being able to fully recall it.

As for Luan Luan, those who knew about her origin had the feeling that she should be aware of the fact that she wasn't blood-related to Qing Shui. After all, she had been wandering around the world alone. In addition to that, she knew she was sent out by her daddy.

Nevertheless, she still insisted that Qing Shui was her daddy. Yiye Jiange didn't understand the reason for it, as her brother looked totally different from Qing Shui.

Unless the real parents of the children were still alive and they managed to find them, no one would bring up these topics, this included Yiye Jiange and Mingyue Gelou. They didn't want to burden their children, nor did they want to shatter the love the children shared with their dad.

Mingyue Gelou in particular, whatever she had now was all bestowed by heaven. It was the very own man of hers. Back then when she was carrying her dying child and had nowhere to go, the person she ran into was Qing Shui. It was this fateful meeting that gave her a turning point in life and gave her everything she had up to this day.

It was especially after she gave Qing Shui his own son that she was considered to have truly blended into Qing Clan. Everything was connected by that son of hers. Deep inside her, she was considered one of the most traditional woman.

Yu Chang was dressed really gracefully. Compared to Luan Luan, she was a bit less wild. In terms of cultivation, hers was also quite far behind Luan Luan's. At present, she was working really hard to cultivate except she wasn't really fond of pursuing cultivation in martial arts. Luan Luan on the other hand, was a bit more ambitious. Or rather, she had a strong desire to ascend in the cultivation of martial arts. This might have had a huge part to do with the fact that she possessed the Heart of Seven Orifices.

Wenren Wushuang secluded herself for cultivation. She had already been doing so for four months. As for the others, they still followed the usual routine. Their strength was also increasing constantly. In comparison, the Qing Clan was growing at quite a fast rate.

Because of Qing Shui, the Qing Clan was finally loaded up with everything. The only thing was that they would still need a bit more time.

They still needed time to train!

The second and third generation of the Qing Clan, as well as Luan Luan and Yu Chang, who were the only adults of the fourth generation, would form teams to go and hunt for Demonic Beasts as a form of training to strengthen themselves.

However, Canghai Mingyue and Mingyue Gelou would secretly follow them and only provide aid when it was absolutely necessary. As long as their lives weren't put in danger, they would

never show up. Even if they were heavily injured, the girls wouldn't give them any help. If not, they would end up building up a habit of thinking that there would be external help in risky situations.

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Qing Shui walked out of the Realm of the Violet Jade Immortal. He took a peek at the still dark night sky. It was only midnight. Since he was done resting, he walked out of his room. Today might have been considered an unpleasant day.

“What's meant to happen will happen. I should quickly solve the problems here and leave. I have been out here for quite a long time, it's time for me to go back and have a look at how things are going. Furthermore, it's going to be new year soon.” Qing Shui let out a sigh standing in the middle of the yard.

Qing Shui randomly ran around the seal at the corner of Mu Clan. He wanted to check if the seal was alright and if there were any parts that needed improvement. In the battle against the Sky Prison Sect, both sides would focus mostly on the seals.

Unknowingly, the sky was already slowly turning bright. Qing Shui simply looked for an open space and started practicing his Taichi Fist. He did everything very naturally. On top of that, he was able to get himself focused right away.

The sun was up. It sprinkled millions of golden light beams upon the land. Qing Shui's body resembled that of a golden body under

the sun. Qing Shui who had both his eyes closed at the moment seemed to be at peace. It felt as if he had cut off every presence from the mortal world, at the same time, it also felt like a type of peace he gained after going through numerous dangers.

Suddenly, Qing Shui opened up both his eyes and abruptly turned around. At a spot a hundred meters away from him, a doddering old man was staring at him. He looked really calm. At first sight, he gave people the impression that he was an elderly man past his prime. If not mistaken, it shouldn't be long until he permanently left the world, as he gave people the impression that he was really, really old.

“There is actually someone so strong in the Mu Clan?” Qing Shui was surprised because he realized that he was actually unable to see through this old man. He felt that the old man was as strong as the Long-armed Vicious Monkey King.

The only unfortunate thing was that the old man seemed to have reached the end of his natural life span. Bluntly speaking, he might leave the world at any moment. As Qing Shui thought deeper into it, he felt that he should be a member of Mu Clan.

“Young man, good, good!”

An old voice came through. That was a kind of indescribable feeling. It sounded really wise and on top of that, the things that the old man said could clearly let people feel his loneliness. Unfortunately, Qing Shui wasn't aware that he was the first man who was able to get the old man to say good twice.

“Senior, you are?” Qing Shui asked politely. The old man had been living far too long. His eyes seemed like he was able to see through everything. On top of that, he was also an incomparably powerful warrior.

“Haha, even I myself am no longer aware of who I really am. But the people from Mu Clan often call me the Old Ancestor, while the people outside usually address me as the old demon.” The old man seemed to be unusually happy.

Upon getting a response, Qing Shui was still in shock. To think that there would be such a powerful man guarding a clan like the Mu Clan. This person was actually a person at the level of being an Old Ancestor. It seemed like clans that had reached this kind of level would often have their own tricks up their sleeves. Only in extremely urgent situations would they show themselves.

“Old man, you must be joking, with you around, there’s nothing to be afraid of. It’s because of you that the Mu Clan is this firm.” Qing Shui smiled and tried to flatter the old man. Everything would break, except for compliments.

“Haha, young man, stop boasting about it. I have lived a long life and seen many things. The Mu Clan is struggling between life and death. It’s already considered to be half dead. From the perspective of the ordinary people, they might seem to be really impressive but deep down, they’re also struggling and are only barely able to defend themselves. Hell, even that could be an exaggeration. In what way are they firm? But when one joins into this circle, coming out on top within it is as hard as ascending to the heavens.

Nor would they not feel resigned to withdraw from it. Besides, there will also be people who wouldn't let you go even if you wished to leave." The old man shook his head. He sounded a bit helpless while he was saying it.

Qing Shui was well aware of what the old man meant. Once the Mu Clan fell, people would just treat it as a stepping stone for their own benefits.

"Here, young man, can you spend some of your time sitting with me?" The old man pointed forward and asked calmly.

"That's exactly what I'm hoping for," Qing Shui smiled and said politely.

The old man was pointing at a bronze colored pavilion. Only now did Qing Shui realize that he had unintentionally walked all the way to the furthest backyard in the Mu Clan. Everything here seemed really old-fashioned.

To think that there would actually be an old man staying here. Qing Shui remembered back when the Fifth Elder from Sky Prison Sect advanced their way here, the old man didn't even show himself. It might have been that he found it unnecessary for him to show up for small matters like that.

"Young man, this time, the Mu Clan is going to walk on the edge of the blades. Are you going to be up there as well?" The old man asked casually. There was not even the slightest change of tone in his gentle voice.

As Qing Shui heard the old man's words, he slightly straightened up his back, only then he responded seriously, "Of course I will walk on that, in fact, I'll be the one to take the lead."

"Haha, actually, you don't really have to do that." The old man shook his head and smiled.

"Why is that so?" Qing Shui was confused.

AST 910 – The Strength Of The Sky Prison Sect, Balancing Act On A Tightrope

“Why is that?” Qing Shui was puzzled.

“Within my Mu Clan, the one you have the deepest relationship with is that girl who calls herself Mu Qing. The smartest choice for you would be to take her away. Given your abilities, it shouldn’t be too hard,” the Elder laughed.

Without external circumstances, leaving with Mu Qing would be easy for Qing Shui. He could take her away with two consecutive Nine Continents Steps, and then escape with her on the Fire Bird. There would be no opportunity for the Sky Prison Sect to chase.

However, he could not comprehend why the Elder would say such a thing.

“I could easily take Mu Qing and leave, but would she willingly come with me?” Qing Shui smiled towards the Elder.

“Hah, you aren’t ruthless enough and too indecisive. Hesitating when a snap decision is required will invariably lead to trouble. If you cannot change this habit of yours, even with your formidable strength, this could still end disastrously,” the Elder sighed while looking at Qing Shui.

Qing Shui could not understand why the Elder sighed. Why would the Elder say these things? As a member of the Mu Clan, did

he really wish for Qing Shui to leave?

“Elder, do you not wish for the Mu Clan to become stronger?” Qing Shui turned around and asked.

“Of course I do, but getting stronger isn’t child’s play. You are one of the most talented people I have seen in my life. The truth is, I do not want to see you die. I want to see your growth and achievements in the next ten, fifty, and hundred years. Unfortunately, there is no hope now.” The Elder stopped, as if he felt pity towards the situation.

This feeling was understandable. An elder who loved martial arts saw an exceptionally talented prodigy at the tail end of his life. It was normal and understandable that he would be fond of this talent. It was just like seeing a beautiful flower bud; most people would want to see it in full bloom. If just a flower bud was already so beautiful, it would be even more alluring when it was in full bloom.

If not for having some psychological abnormality or some compelling reason, nobody would ruthlessly destroy the blossom. One reason would be if the flower was a beauty but the heart was as malicious as a snake or a scorpion...

“Alright, we seem to have talked too much about the distant future. Let’s talk about the matter with the Sky Prison Sect today.” The Elder looked at Qing Shui and laughed.

“Sure, I had the same thought. Please, if you can provide me with

some pointers on what to do.” Qing Shui was not overly confident either. He relied on the fact that he had formations, the Nine Palace Steps and tamed beasts.

Right now, the members of Mu Clan with the Duality Minutest Formation should be at least stronger than the Sky Prison Sect in their formation. Other than this, there’s really no other advantage.

With the addition of the Elder, Qing Shui seemed to have gained a pillar of support.

“You critically injured the Sky Prison’s Old Fifth, so there will be no peaceful settlement in this case. This will be a battle to the death. Their goal is our complete annihilation. This is the usual style of the Sky Prison Sect. With their strength, I can only say that we are walking on a tightrope between two deep cliffs.”

“Elder, how many martial artists with similar strength to you are in the Sky Prison Sect?” Qing Shui asked out of curiosity.

“The Sky Prison Sect has eight Masters. The Sky Prison’s Old Fifth was the weakest one. There are several whose strength is only slightly more than his. However, the Sky Prison Sect has three Heads: the First, Second, and Third of the eight Masters. They are the martial artists with the same strength as me,” the Elder said while looking at Qing Shui.

Qing Shui was not surprised. Having three formidable martial artists like that was not strange. Qing Shui felt that they were not the only ones he had to pay attention to, so he remained silent and

continued to listen to the Elder. To know thyself was to know thy enemy. That was the way to emerge victorious in every battle. The more intel he had before the battle with the Sky Prison Sect, the more he would know about his opponent.

“The eight Masters of Sky Prison Sect are as close as brothers; furthermore, they have two Elders above them. Their strengths are at least fifteen hundred stars. Their abilities in terms of formations and the Sky Prison Sabre are frightening.” The Elder said, helplessly.

Listening to this, Qing Shui felt shocked. The Sky Prison Sect was undoubtedly a Super Sect, the top of a hundred thousand elites. Hearing about their strength, made Qing Shui’s scalp tingled.

“I’m not sure if those two old farts will come or not.” Qing Shui thought in his mind. If those two did not come, then the situation would be manageable. If they did come, it would be devastating to the Mu Clan if their formation broke.

The Elder seemed to have seen through Qing Shui’s thoughts. He smiled and said, “The Sky Prison Sect’s two old beasts will not come unless you annihilate the entire Sky Prison Sect. Otherwise, they won’t interfere in such a small matter.”

“Elder, you know the things I placed in the Mu Clan. With your strength, how long would the formation hold you back?” Qing Shui asked after much thought.

“If there were no obstacles, I’d be able to break through it in

fifteen minutes. In any shorter timeframe, it would be too difficult,” the Elder said after thinking for a bit.

This was bad news for Qing Shui, since the Mu Clan’s Elder did not have any previous knowledge of formations. However, the Sky Prison Sect was different. They were well versed in several formations. Unfortunately, Qing Shui had not been successful with the Nine Palace Eight Trigrams Formation, otherwise he would be confident enough to fend off all of them.

“I can help you hold off one without too much difficulty, but that’s only one of them. For the rest , you must think of some other method. Other than the Masters of Sky Prison Sect, the rest are not a problem to worry about. If they retreat to their formation to save themselves, then you should be careful. Rumor has it that it is a formation within a formation.” The Elder said after a bit of hesitation.

“Formation within a formation?”

“Yes!”

Qing Shui was familiar with the concept of a formation within a formation. It was just placing a formation within another one, but the requirements to do so were high. Formations within formations were strong and could provide temporary salvation. For example, if Qing Shui was trapped within a formation while being attacked from all four sides, he could place a formation within the formation to give himself time to find a way to break through.

However, formations within a formation were not easy to place. This was because formations could counteract each other, which could render the formation within useless.

There was a special type of formation within a formation that was especially potent. It could forcibly steal the other formation's Spirit Qi. Qing Shui knew this was the type of formation within a formation that the Elder was mentioning.

Another type of formation within a formation was a trap formation inside another trap formation. One example would be a bigger Duality Minutest Formation with a smaller Duality Minutest Formation inside. However, the Duality Minutest Formation used in conjunction with the Five Elements Minor Formation was not considered a formation within a formation.

The Five Elements Minor Formation was a Death Formation. It required the cooperation of several martial artists.

When it came to large-scale close quarter killing, people would have to cooperate in order to annihilate the enemy. This could not be considered a formation, but rather the foundation of a formation.

Usually, there would be no conflict. Using the Duality Minutest Formation with the Five Elements Minor Formation had originally been Qing Shui's idea anyway. It was a method of self-preservation for the Mu Clan.

He had even taught them the Duality Steps, so that they could use it with the Duality Minutest Formation.

They continued to discuss many things, but the Elder did not make any decisions. These decisions were left to Qing Shui and the head of the Mu Clan to decide. He was just an observer who was willing to help them hold off the opposition for a bit. Mainly, he just wanted to do what he could, so that when he departed the world, he could go in peace.

This was because the Mu Clan would undergo a huge change because of the youngster in front of his eyes.

By the time Qing Shui got up to leave, it was already morning. He spotted Mu Qing's silhouette in the distance.

"Elder!" Mu Qing paid her respects to the Elder.

"Haha. Good, good. The talent of our Mu Clan is the best. Missy, remember to cherish what is in front of you," the Elder said with a smile. He then left after waving goodbye.

Qing Shui bowed with a smile. Mu Qing blushed while bowing. She then left together with Qing Shui.

She had understood the Elder's true meaning from his words. Before, she had a guilty conscience but hearing the Elder's words made her happy, since she had gained the support of the Elder. Now she could really do what she wanted.

“Qing Shui, why were you at the Elder’s manor? He doesn’t pay attention to the affairs of the world anymore, but how come he invited you over?” Mu Qing said while walking with Qing Shui a bit further.

“I went to see if the surrounding formation had any issues, but accidentally ended up at the Elder’s manor. How did you know I was here?” Qing Shui said, looking at Mu Qing.

Mu Qing said as her cheeks turned red, “I tried to find you in many places, but thought you had left. However, the Elder sent word and told me you were here.” Mu Qing said all this while looking downwards, trying to avoid eye contact with Qing Shui.

Qing Shui smiled and stretched his hand out to hold hers. He softly grasped her hand once and let go.

He sighed in his mind. The Elder had said he was indecisive. He had enough self-awareness to know this was true. Even now, he realized if he did not want to chase her, he should not be giving her hope. However, Qing Shui felt that he had to do this, because this simple action could awaken her desire to live.

Mu Qing did not say a word. She was happy at this moment, and smiled towards Qing Shui. As she walked forward, her dress accompanied her seductive figure marvelously.

Sometime after noon, Qing Shui decided to wait in his room for a bit. However, an uproar could be heard outside. As he stepped out

the door, he spotted Mu Qing heading over as well. Both of them rushed towards the direction that the sound was coming from.

“Incoming!”

“The members of the Sky Prison Sect are here, everyone get ready!”

“Kill those brutes! I have long been unable to stand their belittling behavior.”

“That’s right, kill them! They rely on formations to bully people. Today, we fight them inside the formation. Either they die or we die.”

Noise continued to reach Qing Shui’s ears. It looked like the Sky Prison Sect had arrived.

By the time Qing Shui and Mu Qing rushed over to the front yard, more than half of the Mu Clan had already gathered. The women had already hidden themselves in the secret chamber. It had been sealed beforehand with a formation. If nobody eventually went to unseal the formation, it meant that they had been annihilated. Thus, they would by then escape through the secret passage. Whether they could escape in one piece would be up to them at that point.

Mu Fengyang, Mu Qian and several other people were here. They were all Mu Qing’s elders, part of the direct bloodline of the Mu

Clan. Other people had already been dismissed. In this situation, they would not be able to help in any way, and could even end up being distractions. Thus, their absence did not create any ill will. However, many whose strength was decent still decided to stay. More importantly, they were all completely loyal to the Mu Clan, otherwise they would not have been allowed to stay behind.

AST 911 – Violent Incoming Force, Tianyu Liangyu, Killing Weapon

“Qing Shui, lass, you’ve both come!” Mu Qian smiled and greeted, as if he was very happy to see his daughter together with Qing Shui. His casual words caused Mu Qing to flush. It was just like the words one’s parents would say to their newly wedded children.

“Father!” Mu Qing answered, smiling as she walked over to Mu Qian.

“Elder sister, why do I feel that you’re much prettier than before?” Mu Xue teased.

“Lass, are you itching for a beating again?”

“Old Master!” Qing Shui greeted Mu Fengyang and the few other old men, then nodded to the others. Now, Qing Shui’s status in everyone’s heart was no longer the same as before. After all, he had crippled the Sky Prison’s Old Fifth in one move and everyone was clear how powerful he was, as a result, they now treated him differently.

Qing Shui then looked toward the distance. Several huge, brightly-colored flying beasts were heading toward them from the far distance. There were several hundreds of people on them, with quite a number of them wearing multicolored clothes.

Formation attire!

In order to see better when setting up formations, formation attires came in different colors which reduces the difficulty of constructing formations. Those who were of the same group would wear the same color, making it easier to differentiate themselves.

The prime force of the Sky Prison Sect had come. Qing Shui's gaze was fixed on the few flying beasts in the front. There were seven Multicolored Great Bird, with an old man on each of them. However, compared to that old man from the Mu Clan, they could be considered to be younger and had more vitality.

Other than the seven Multicolored Great Bird, there were also several tens of Multicolored Great Bird which were comparatively smaller. The cultivators on each of the birds wore clothes of the same color. On one of the birds, there was a group of old men who were clearly younger than the seven in the lead. The colors of their clothes were all different, but it would definitely be associated with one of the colors on the other birds, with the only difference being the prints on the clothes.

What made Qing Shui happy was that the majority of the people in the Mu Clan were not afraid, but rather excited. Of course, there were also some whose face had gone pale. After all, they were up against the Sky Prison Sect.

The people who had stayed behind were the Mu Clan's elites and would do anything for the Mu Clan. Therefore, it was normal for them to be unafraid of danger. These people were willing to even give their lives in battles for the Mu Clan, therefore, they were

people who didn't fear anything.

In the formation that surrounded the Mu Clan, only the space before Qing Shui was not sealed up, with the eye of the formation vacated. This was left for the people from the Mu Clan to pass through, and right now, everyone was gathered here.

However, they had already been grouped together and would be able to use the Five Elements Minor Formation at any time. They had practiced the simplest joint attack in the Five Elements Minor Formation for the past few days and nights.

The team of old men that Mu Qing led into the Sky Penetrating Mountains previously had the best coordination and were also the strongest. Due to the formation and the fact that they were all Peak Martial Saints, they were a tremendous force to be wary of.

Dong Yan and Sun Yan also led a group of people despite not having the same level of coordination. The two of them had learned from Qing Shui the longest, and while they weren't comparable to Mu Qing, they could still be considered to be quite strong in this group. Furthermore, the two of them were very talented and although they didn't know how to set up the formation, they were able to utilize it simply.

...

“Eldest Brother, look! Around the Mu Clan!”

Amongst the seven leading Multicolored Great Bird, one of the old men suddenly pointed to the ground and said. There were no emotions in his voice. It was just pure sound, as if it didn't come from a person.

“Formation... Old Fifth had said that there's a young man amongst them who knows about formations. Seems like this formation has been set up by that young man.” Another old but bright voice lit up.

“Does Eldest Brother recognize this formation?” Another old man took a look for a while and said.

“There are endless variations to formations, but I'm confident to be able to pass through it very quickly. Would you guys have any problems?” The old man said casually.

“No problems. This is a binding formation. As long as we can pass through this formation, it should be an easy feat for us to use our Sky Prison Sabre Formation to kill them.” This time around, it was an old man wearing a brown colored attire.

“3rd Brother, don't be careless. A binding formation can be modified at any time. Old Fifth had been crippled in a single move. That young man definitely has his strong areas, we mustn't be careless.” The leading old man wearing golden clothes said.

“Eldest Brother, even if that fellow is a great talent, he's still young. We must get rid of him this time around, otherwise, our Sky Prison Sect might be destroyed by him in the future.” An old

man in green clothes said with a frown.

“2nd Brother is right. We must not only get rid of that young man, but we can’t let that old monster from the Mu Clan off too. Since we’re taking action, we need to be more thorough. Otherwise, our Sky Prison Sect would be in trouble in the future.”

As they conversed, they had arrived before the Mu Clan’s courtyard. The group gradually came down from the Multicolored Great Bird and formed their own formations with the seven old men in the front.

Those slightly younger old men each led a team of several tens, or close to a hundred of people, quickly getting into their formations.

Qing Shui and the others looked outside. He was also very agitated, even slightly nervous. It was because the opponents were truly powerful, and like what the Mu Clan’s old man had said, amongst the seven people in the lead, three of them seemed to be truly unfathomable.

Furthermore, on the several hundreds of people that the other party had brought, each of them was equipped with a strange looking sabre with three shallow troughs that were meant for releasing blood. The sabre’s blade was slightly thick with a spiral shape on the inner side.

Sky Prison Sabre.

It was said that this was the Sky Prison Sect's unique weapon and when one got wounded by it, the damage would be several times stronger than ordinary weapons. Although it would not increase one's attack, the damage inflicted was tremendous.

This was still secondary. What Qing Shui was worried about was their sheer numbers. The previous time, even when the Flower Crusher created their formations, there were only about 20 of them. However this time their number was about four times more, with over 80 people in each group.

The 'Sky Prison Sabre Formation' had the same principles as the 'Five Elements Minor Formation' and as long as there was good coordination-the bigger the numbers, the stronger the prowess. With one look, Qing Shui could tell that these people they were currently facing were not what the 'Flower Crusher' could be compared with.

"The Mu Clan has become more capable." The old man dressed in golden clothes said to the people from the Mu Clan. His voice wasn't very loud, but it could be clearly heard within multiple li in the area.

"It's not that the Mu Clan has become more capable, but that the Sky Prison Sect has pushed people too far." Mu Fengyang frowned and replied.

"Haha, pushed people too far? This is hilarious. Is there a need for us to bully your Mu Clan? Are you guys worth it?" The old man's voice was full of disdain, with his gaze as if he was looking at ants.

Qing Shui frowned. To think that such a powerful cultivator still had such a bad character at his age. However, he threw away this thought very quickly. No matter how strong one was, no matter how long one has lived, he would still be human. Humans have various emotions. Otherwise, he wouldn't have come here.

Qing Shui seemed to have understood some things at this moment.

As long as one was human, one could be killed, one could be defeated!

“It's true that the Sky Prison Sect is strong, but even a rabbit would bite when it is anxious.” The voice of the Mu Clan's old man rang out.

“Old man Mu!”

“Old Ancestor!”

“Sir!”

...

When the old man dressed in gold clothes saw the Mu Clan's old man, he frowned and shouted.

The other people from the Mu Clan also called out to him respectively, with the last greeting coming from Qing Shui.

When he saw that the old man dressed in golden clothes was frowning, Qing Shui felt slightly more hopeful. It seemed that the old man still had some reservations towards the Mu Clan's old man.

“Since things have come down to this, there's no need to say anymore. When you guys dared to cripple my fifth brother, you should have expected for this day to come.” The old man dressed in golden clothes said with an air of dominance.

“That rubbish had wasted so many years of his life. If he doesn't have power, then he shouldn't be out to bite others. He only has himself to blame.” Qing Shui's calm voice rang out.

He hated these type of people the most. People who were arrogant and domineering, who cared for people close to them but didn't give a hoot to everyone else. Those who would stomp down on others as they wished just because they had the power to do so. With the Flower Crusher's characters, one would be able to tell what kind of personality the people of the Sky Prison Sect had. And now, they were even so unreasonable to resort on wiping out an entire clan.

All of these just because they felt that they were stronger than their opponents and thus could afford to throw their weight around. Qing Shui let out a sigh helplessly. In the world of the nine continents, the people with power are the ones who had the right to speak. Those without any power could only shrink back into

their shells. This was nothing rare, but anyone would feel angry if this were to happen to them.

Qing Shui still couldn't get used to seeing such domineering people bullying others.

“Seems like you're the one who crippled my fifth brother, and you're the one who had set up the formation here.” The old man dressed in golden clothes locked his gaze on Qing Shui, as if he wanted to see through him.

Qing Shui's words didn't infuriate him. Although Qing Shui's tone was scolding, his words were nothing to an old man like him. He was merely angry that Qing Shui had crippled the Sky Prison Sect's Old Fifth.

The eight Sovereigns of the Sky Prison Sect were orphans that the elders from the sect had taken in. There were many of them at the start, but eight of them ended up being the only ones who had survived. They were very close and had been brothers for a few hundreds of years.

Bad people were still humans, people who still had kinship and feelings. Moreover, whether someone was good or evil was just relative and there was no clear cut definition to it. If a person were to commit an evil act, doing so with a reason and this reason seemed righteous, the result would tend to be different. Regardless if one was killing people without any reason, or doing so only in order to kill, it was still an act of killing. Even if a person was stealing to save his sickly mother, it was still an act of stealing.

“Young man, sometimes, making a showy display of your abilities might not necessarily be something good. You have no future if you were to stay with the Mu Clan. Are you interested in joining our Sky Prison Sect? I can give you everything that you want.” The old man wearing golden clothes looked at Qing Shui, his eyes lit up.

Qing Shui looked at the old man dressed in golden clothes. He even thought that the other party sounded extremely sincere, even the people around him felt the same. However, Qing Shui knew that this guy was a shrewd old fox.

“If you’re willing to kill yourself, I’ll agree to your condition.” Qing Shui said calmly.

“You’re being insincere now. Although our Sky Prison Sect holds outsiders in contempt, we’re very united internally. Moreover, the things that I, Tianyu Liangyi, says always count. As long as you join our Sky Prison Sect, I can even promise you that you’ll be the future Sovereign for the Sky Prison Sect. You’ll be the strongest and when the time comes, it’ll be easy for you to kill me.” The old man dressed in golden clothes said slowly, as if there was some magical charm to his words.

“Haha, why are you hoping for me to join the Sky Prison Sect now? Are you scared?” Qing Shui didn’t expect this old fox to say this, but he knew that this old man was in fact very tricky and was focusing on attacking him mentally.

“Scared? Haha, maybe I’ll be in the future. But right now, you can’t stop me. Consider my offer, I’ll give you the time it takes for half an incense to burn.” The old man wearing golden clothes said calmly.

Mu Qing looked at Qing Shui. She didn’t seem to be nervous and was very calm. However, there were still some people who were very nervous. The old men from the Mu Clan, Mu Fengyang, and Mu Qian were all looking at this scene calmly.

“No need for that. Let’s just start the fight. Since we can’t have a settlement, let’s just see whose fist is tougher.” Qing Shui didn’t bring out his Thunder God nor his Big Dipper Sword. Instead, he took out the Poison Dragon Dagger!

Killing weapon!

AST 912 – Killing Start, Reversal Of [Qiankun](#)

Qiankun can also mean Universe or Heaven and Earth or Yin Yang

Killing weapon!

Poison weapon!

Qing Shui took out the extremely toxic Poison Dragon Dagger. Its surface had a layer of pitch black fog which was like ink. It was so shiny that it would make one shudder.

Qing Shui knew that he needed to end this battle quickly, and he must swiftly kill off a few of them. Otherwise, this would be a very tough fight. Most importantly, his opponents knew about formations.

When Tianyu Liangyi saw the Poison Dragon Dagger in Qing Shui's hand, he was also astonished. From afar, he could sense how terrifying the poison was and even he had no confidence to go up against its toxic nature.

The reason why Qing Shui took it out so early was so that he could apply mental pressure on his opponents, causing them to be on their guards and reveal all their hidden cards.

Of course, this was not Qing Shui's only card.

“Lang Yun, lead a group into the Formation Destroyer!” Tianyu

Liangyi waved his hand and commanded.

Immediately, an old man behind him led a team and dashed in. Another Formation Flag appeared in Qing Shui's hand and he pierced it into the eye of the formation right before him.

After the group entered the formation, they were first at a loss and then started to move around in circles. Qing Shui didn't find this surprising. These people wouldn't be able to get out of the trap in a while.

"Eldest Brother, 2nd Brother, the two of you should lead people to get rid of them." Qing Shui said softly. Although this was a battlefield, they were very serious. Qing Shui's expression was very grim.

"Alright!"

Dong Yan and Sun Yan led over 30 people and entered the Five Elements Minor Formation. The two of them each led over ten people, but at their level, this was the maximum number of people they could work with. If there were too many people, they wouldn't be able to coordinate well and the enemies would be able to break through them very easily.

The positioning of the Five Elements Minor Formation was a circle, with the eye of the formation in the center. Dong Yan and Sun Yan stood in the center while the others formed a circle around them. When they were up against the enemies, they would always look toward their front.

Even if they were to be in deep trouble, they would be able to hang on for a short period of time or even get out of the fix.

Duality Steps!

The two teams performed the Duality Steps in the formation and while they appeared to be slightly clumsy, they were able to pull it off. After all, these people were still quite strong and their learning curve was better than ordinary people.

The two teams dashed toward the opponents like two snakes, and when both parties came into contact, they quickly got into their formations.

To the people outside, they were moving at the speed of snails and it was hard to tell what on earth they were doing. Only the people inside knew how dangerous the situation was, with the place filled with killing intent.

Tianyu Liangyi was a very cautious person and he first sent out one team into the formation as a scout to check out its prowess. It would be even better if they were able to find out the method to break the formation.

Qing Shui also looked at the formation seriously. This first battle was very important and they couldn't afford to lose. They must keep the opponent's team in the formation, wiping them out.

Qing Shui didn't wish to let Mu Qing and the other 20 over

people take action. However, he couldn't send the weakest teams either, and thus he let Dong Yan and Sun Yan to take action.

Qing Shui could clearly sense everything that was happening within the formation.

The location they were fighting in was the sea, and they were all above the water's surface. However, tremendous gushing waves kept appearing in the surroundings and there would be an occasional appearance of a huge sea snake which would swallow one of them up.

Of course, those who were swallowed were from the Sky Prison Sect.

Dong Yan, Sun Yan, and the others knew the way to dodge such 'semi-real' things. The best way to dodge them would be to use the Duality Steps. The Duality Steps was also known as the Yin Yang Steps, and under this situation, everyone was basically half a step away from hell.

If they weren't careful, they would be eternally doomed. They could dodge with the Duality Steps. Using the Duality Steps was like applying the right remedy to a disease and they were able to dodge even when they weren't fluent with the use of it yet. However, it would be different for those who didn't grasp the knacks of it.

This was the danger of the formation's Killing Gate. After all, in terms of sheer numbers, they were far a match for the Sky Prison

Sect and thus they would need to tap on the dangers within the formation.

Otherwise, Qing Shui wouldn't have the confidence to let the 30 of them go against over 80 people.

Sky Prison Sabre Formation!

The people from the Sky Prison Sect quickly got into formation, standing in a curving arc before quickly dashing towards Dong Yan and Sun Yan.

The people that Dong Yan and Sun Yan led formed an oval shape since they were not dealing with enemies who were coming in on them from all directions. They rapidly closed in on the people of the Sky Prison Sect.

Both Dong Yan and Sun Yan stood in the center of the formation. Dong Yan's weapon was a scythe which Qing Shui had given to him. It had been left in the Realm of the Violet Jade Immortal for very long. The one which Qing Shui had given him was the Evil Dragon Tooth. The Psychotic Demon Scythe was still in the Realm of the Violet Jade Immortal.

Sun Yan's weapon was a longsword which was as clear as the autumn water. It didn't look like an ordinary weapon either.

Shield!

The people from the Sky Prison Sect gathered to the front to put up their defenses, but Dong Yan and Sun Yan attacked ferociously like a venomous snake, killing two of them.

Spin!

The entire Five Elements Minor Formation started to spin. Although it was not fast, it immediately reflected the opponent's attacks, which left an indescribable feeling. Then, Dong Yan and Sun Yan attacked once again.

Swoosh!

A huge, towering wave gushed forth. Dong Yan and Sun Yan led their team to dodge it with ease. Such a situation was already normal to them in the practices they had been through.

Seeing that their opponents were scattered from their formation by the towering wave, Dong Yan and Sun Yan didn't let this chance slip away from them. They once again dashed over while in the Five Elements Minor Formation, focusing their powers and killing people easily as if they were cutting up vegetables.

...

From the outside, it was hard to see the actual situation within the formation. Only those who had a certain level of mastery in formations or cultivators who were extremely strong would be able to sense something. Otherwise, from the outside, it would

only seem as if both parties were moving around in the formation.

Very quickly, Dong Yan and Sun Yan led the 30 people and appeared once again before everyone. However, the rest of the people had all disappeared. The formation was still intact.

The people who had came out were extremely agitated. After all, the ones whom they had killed were the people from the Sky Prison Sect who were in their formations. In the past, they would have never even dared to think of pulling off something like this, but to think that they had succeeded just now.

In the past, formations were a legendary existence. None of them had expected to be able to create formations and kill their enemies one day.

Tianyu Liangyi looked at the scene before him and frowned. He had not expected that this young man would be able to put up such a top notch formation. It seemed that he had to be the one to lead the team in.

“Everyone enter the formation! Do not spread out, get into formation and advance! Everyone follow my lead!” After saying that, Tianyu Liangyi took the lead and dashed in. The other people didn’t dare to have any delays either and all of them quickly followed after.

Seeing that every single member of their opponents had entered the formation, Qing Shui frowned. He had planned on slowly reducing their numbers this way. However, it seemed like it was

impossible.

“Miss, I’ll create an opening for you. You lead your men in and go for the kill.” Looking at the formation, Qing Shui said to Mu Qing, not even turning his head.

“Alright!”

“As for the others, don’t stay too far away from us. Act according to the circumstance. Coordinate well while following my commands. Don’t panic. If the situation is grave, then enter the Killing Gate to get yourself out of the fix.” Qing Shui said slowly before taking out a formation flag and threw it towards Tianyu Liangyi who was in the formation.

It was because the formation flag there had been destroyed.

“Miss, lead your team and wait at the Qian position. The others set up formation at the Gate of Illusion.” Qing Shui gave it some thought and said before planting three formation flags at the Qian position.

Qing Shui then threw at least another ten formation flags into the formation, separating two of the teams. He then continued to replace the formation flags which had been destroyed.

There were only the old men and Mu Fengyang left with Qing Shui. Mu Qian followed Mu Qing’s team since he was most suited for the eye of the formation.

“Sir, let’s go in and kill!” Qing Shui smiled and said.

“Alright!” The Mu Clan’s old man appeared to be very calm, but at this moment, his eyes were very bright.

Before they left, Qing Shui threw in the formation flag he was holding, hoping to stop the enemies for a longer time before he entered the formation together with the Mu Clan’s old men.

They appeared directly before Tianyu Liangyi and the others. Amidst his opponents’ astonishment, the formation flag in Qing Shui’s hand landed three meters before him. Suddenly, the Spiritual Qi in the formation went into havoc, as if the entire world had gone into a state of chaos.

Reversal of Qiankun !

Qing Shui smiled and disappeared before the opponents’ astonished gaze. At the same time, the Sky Prison Sect’s 2nd Sovereign and a team of people in black formation attire also disappeared.

“Not good! 2nd Brother is in danger! Everyone, follow me!” Tianyu Liangyi’s countenance finally changed. It was only now that he realized how terrifying the young man was.

Qing Shui and the old men from the Mu Clan appeared in another location together with Sky Prison Sect’s 2nd Sovereign

and a team of about 100 people in the Sky Prison Sabre Formation.

Their opponents were over ten times more in numbers compared to Qing Shui's side. However, the people from the Sky Prison Sect had gone pale. Even the countenance of the 2nd Sovereign, who was wearing a green attire, had also turned slightly pale.

“Into formation!” The old man wearing green bellowed out to the people behind him and entered the formation as well. He was slightly anxious since the young man was too eerie. Furthermore, Old man Mu was there as well.

He didn't have the confidence to take on Old man Mu alone, and might even have some concerns since Old man Mu was a Demon Refiner.

The old man in green stood in the eye of the formation and the other 100 of them were like a single entity. Qing Shui had initially planned on using the Mighty Elephant Stomp to break their formation, but it was now useless.

“Young man, let me have a go. I wonder if this works against formations.”

Mu Clan's old man said, sending out some powder before saying, “Stop your breath!”

The people opposite smelled a faint acidic scent and tried to stop the powder, but it was already too late.

“Ah, I can’t move my arm!”

“The same for my leg!”

“ ... ”

Qing Shui was stunned. It seemed that this was a type of powder from refining demon. He had wanted to use the Frosted Iron Balls tempered with poison to break the enemy’s formation with a Twin Dragon Explosion. Although such a formation was very powerful, it was defenseless against attacks like poison powder.

It could be said to be a great flaw.

In a short instant, the Sky Prison Sabre Formation was broken through. However, that old man in green was fine. It was just that right now, while glaring at Mu Clan’s old man, he was now holding onto a huge sabre that was like an anti-cavalry sabre that was used to slice off the legs of horses.

AST 913 – Formation Destroyer, Coordination, The Valiant Mu Clan's Old Man

The Mu Clan's old man didn't seem to be bothered at all by the other person's gaze, and chuckled instead. "Sky Prison Sect's Second Sovereign, you are afraid!"

In Qing Shui's palm was a 10,000 Years Frosted Iron Ball. Now that he had already broken through to Martial Emperor, it was naturally needless to discuss about his Hidden Weapons abilities further. Even for the Sky Prison Sect's Second Sovereign's strength, he could only evade at the mercy of Qing Shui's hidden weapon.

This was one of Qing Shui's trump cards. The moment he used it, he would be killing his opponent.

Mighty Elephant Stomp!

Qing Shui suddenly stomped towards in front of him. An enormous wave of energy spread forward, together with a big wave of flying rocks could be seen streaking towards the front.

"Make your move, old man!"

Qing Shui didn't wait for his skill to take effect after he finished his sentence, he immediately activated his Fiery Golden Eyes and Emperor's Qi before he dashed towards the old man in green attire.

He could still sense the strength of the old man in green across him.

Although he couldn't exactly sense it, his strength should be about the same as the Mu Clan's old man. Now that he had been weakened by Qing Shui, there was basically no hope left for him at all.

The old man in green was startled. His face turned fierce as he brandished his broadsword and slashed towards the Mu Clan's old man.

While the Mu Clan's old man dashed towards the old man in green, he took out a crystal card with one hand and tossed it towards the old man in green that was in front of him. Qing Shui didn't manage to catch a good look at the crystal card either.

Sluggish Bear Crystal Card!

Additional effects – slow one's reaction and half the speed of the target.....

The crystal card in his other hand was slapped against himself. There was a wisp of a golden green smoke image depicted on it. It was a crystal card that could tremendously boost one's speed.

By the time the Mu Clan's old man had dashed in front of the old man in green, he had a silver rod that was at least four meters long in his hand. Its thickness was about the size of an adult's arm, but

the handle part was slightly slimmer, about the size of a wrist.

He struck down with his rod. Although that strike appeared very normal, it was grand and magnificent. An afterimage and a black shadow could be seen. That strike seemed like it was going to split the mountains open.

The countenance of the old man in green greatly changed as he stopped dead in his tracks. He raised the broadsword in his hand with all his might to counter the rod because he realized that he wouldn't be able to evade it at all. It felt as if his body was weighed down by a mountain.

Boom!

The dull noise that rang out could make one feel especially awesome. The old man in green, that had been weakened by Qing Shui, was quickly beaten by the Mu Clan's old man to the point that blood dripped out of the corner of his mouth.

After that loud noise, the long rod was brought down once again in succession!

Boom boom.....

The pitiful old man in green had half of his body sunk into the stone surface beneath him. That final strike bashed the head of the old man in green. He could not do anything but to only have a helpless look on his face as he got finished by that single bash.

There was nothing he could do.

One with inferior strength and also an inferior speed could only be beaten...

After the old man in green was taken care of, Qing Shui breathed out a sigh of relief. Among the people that came, only three of them were difficult to handle. Without those three, Qing Shui felt that the opponents wouldn't be able to stand a chance against them because he was also knowledgeable in formation techniques.

The corpses of the old man in green and the others disappeared very quickly. Qing Shui smiled at the old man from Mu Clan. "We are going to hold them off for a little while. Senior and the rest should have started moving."

.....

At the same time, Mu Qing and two teams from the Sky Prison Sect Sabre Formation were fighting each other. However, Mu Qing's side of more than twenty people was stronger. Mu Qian was also there and on top of that, he was also the eye of the formation.

But there were also strong people among those two opposing teams – two of the eight Sky Prison Sect's sovereigns. Their strengths were slightly stronger than the Sky Prison Sect's Fifth Sovereign. Mu Qian's strength was about the same as the Sky Prison Sect's Fifth Sovereign so they still had a chance to fight back.

Mu Qing stood by Mu Qian's side. The opponents were currently attacking Mu Qian and the rest from both sides. They were not only outnumbered, but also at a disadvantage in strength.

The two sides fought hand to hand and there was one casualty on the Mu Clan's side. For formations like the Sky Prison Sect Sabre Formation and Five Elements Minor Formation, a few casualties wouldn't affect the formation that much. Even so, this was still heart aching for the Mu Clan.

These were all the older generation of the Mu Clan and this team were especially important to the current Mu Clan, even to the future of the Mu Clan.

Two people were heavily injured again in succession. Although the casualties among the opponents were twice that of the Mu Clan, Mu Qian still issued a firm order to get into the Gate of Illusion.

Poison beings!

There were countless poison beings that would make one's blood run cold here. Mu Qing's face flushed crimson when she saw the poison beings here. They reminded her of the time when she first came here with Qing Shui.

Not only she was no longer afraid of them, but also felt a little cordial.

After Mu Qing and Mu Qian led the rest into the Gate of Illusion, they got into the formation immediately. The countless poison beings in the surroundings didn't move. As long as some specific spots were not stepped on, these beings would remain stationary.

The two sovereigns of the Sky Prison Sect clenched their teeth as they issued out the order to go after them. If they couldn't even take care of the younger generations of the Mu Clan, they might as well retire immediately.

They got into formation and entered the Gate of Illusion cautiously!

This was the moment Mu Qing waited for and this was also what Qing Shui had told her before. She stomped both of her feet on an empty spot with all her might. This sent a large group of poison beings to rush towards the people of the Sky Prison Sect.

Among them was a slippery poison mud python that was about 100 meters long. The entire body of this thing looked like a silt and appeared to be extremely sleek. Knives and swords were almost ineffective against it. It wasn't only highly toxic, but also possessed great strength that made it very formidable.

Furthermore, half of this place was a swamp. If anyone that wasn't a powerful Martial Emperor got caught by it, they would be basically done for.

Other than that, at least a hundred octopuses and poison beasts also rushed forward. The sight of the multi colored frogs drained

the blood from the faces of some people. Just a little accident and they could get these poison beings sticking onto them. Some people hit or hack off those poison beings off their body with the Sky Prison Sabre.

These half-real poison beings felt just like real ones and they could even kill. Even people who had knowledge about formations would be afraid. Those that didn't know formations would be really scared to death, while those that knew formations would know that these things could kill.

Just when their opponents were in chaos, Mu Qing led her people into a Five Elements Minor Formation and intersected the enemies' Sky Prison Sabre Formation in a cross method. The lives of a few dozen men were taken away in a flash.

The Duality Steps and Formation Techniques of the people that Mu Qing led were at the small success stage. They were able to move freely here and evade these troublesome poison beings. Most importantly, they could exploit these poison beings as an opportunity to massacre.

In just a short amount of time, the number of their opponents were reduced by almost half. This greatly enraged the two sovereigns of the Sky Prison Sect, who had just calmed down not long ago. They couldn't wait to slay their opponents down with their blades any longer.

An enticing smile broke across Mu Qing's face. Two little formation flags appeared in her hands before she waved her delicate hand!

The two formation flags were planted on the both sides of the Sky Prison Sect's groups. In just an instant, an alarmingly enormous wave emerged in the surroundings. Mu Qing was also surprised. She didn't expect the effect to be this great. Qing Shui had told her that if they made it here, she must plant those two little formation flags on that location.

That enormous wave that was like a gigantic tornado rose up from beneath the people of the Sky Prison Sect and immediately swallowed up the crowd.

By the time everything went still, the people of the Mu Clan were once again surprised by the sight that greeted them. Only two dying sovereigns of the Sky Prison Sect remained while the rest had vanished. It would only be a matter of time before these two sovereigns of the Sky Prison Sect would die anyway.

The two sovereigns that were slightly stronger than the Sky Prison Sect's Fifth Sovereign stared at the people of the Mu Clan before they collapsed. Their eyes remained widely opened.

Rumble!

Just then, the formation shook. Mu Qing was startled, she knew that this formation had broken down. A gap had been opened in the formation that the Mu Clan was surrounding. Qing Shui's handsome face flashed across her mind, oddly calming down her mind that had been chaotic.

All of a sudden, everyone was exposed in front of their opponents. That moment shocked many, but some remained calm.

Tianyu Liangyi wasn't surprised, but he was grieving. It only took him a glance to know that the Second, Sixth, Seventh and Eighth Sovereign of the Sky Prison Sect were dead and the nearly 1000 people who were brought here had been reduced to only half.

Qing Shui was very calm too. However, he was extremely tensed up, just like a bow that had been pulled tautly back because the situation right now could very easily turn into a hopeless situation. Both parties were only about 50 meters apart from each other. They were simply too close to one another.

“KILL!”

Tianyu Liangyi suddenly yelled. He was dressed in gold and had a dazzling golden Sky Prison Sabre in his hand. He rushed towards Qing Shui and the Mu Clan's old man. The Third Sovereign, who was dressed in a brown robe, also rushed towards them furiously.

At the same time, the others also rushed towards them.

Petal Rain Under the Skies!

Qing Shui quickly reacted. Without any hesitation, he performed the most destructive technique of his hidden weapons which was also the one that had the most chance to force his opponents back.

The Mu Clan's old man pushed Qing Shui away and slapped a card against his body. He performed a 'A Horizontal River breaking the Current' technique as the long rod in his hands struck down abruptly. The might of that bash was world shaking. He was able to perform all of this in just the blink of an eye.

Qing Shui looked at the old man with gratefulness in his heart, he was also able to catch a glimpse of that old man's card. It was a crystal card that had a 'gigantic tortoise shell'. Not only that, it was five-colored. Qing Shui knew that this card should be able to temporarily bring the old man's defense to its peak.

Qing Shui's poison needle also struck its target. But a tinkling noise rang out, letting him, know that his Petal Rain Under the Skies didn't work. However, it was able to obstruct the opponent's attacks.

Qing Shui was rushing into it a little. The opponents were also covered in cold sweat from being surprised by Qing Shui's poison needles. If it wasn't for the Sky Prison Sabre, they would have been in trouble. They were able to tell how terrifying those poison needles could be.

While they were fighting, the rest also got into formations and prepared to fight. The moment when Qing Shui was pushed aside by the old man, he summoned all of his demonic beasts out without any hesitation.

Since the formation had been broken now, the Duality Minutest Formation effect was gone. They would have to fight the enemies head on. For their side, they were clearly at a disadvantage so he

would rather prefer some of his demonic beasts get injured.

The surroundings were instantly filled with demonic beasts. There were countless Jade Emperor Bees, demonic spiders, birds and the Diamond Gigantic Elephant. There was also the Thunderous Beast, which was concealed on the ground. The Gold-Silver Colored Butterfly was also partly unnoticeable.

Qing Shui's action had completely made everyone dumbfounded on their spot. The people at the scene were all strong cultivators, and some were even top-notch cultivators. Even so, no one had ever seen a Beast Tamer that had this many demonic beasts.....

Qing Shui would not let his opponents have the chance to be amazed right now. The Five-Headed Demonic Spider had immediately lunged towards the weaker sovereign standing across it. Even among this many demonic spiders, the Five-Headed Demonic Spider was unstoppable. It rushed forward in just a flash and immediately dispatched a person – the Fourth Sovereign.

AST 914 – Killing The Third Sovereign, Changes Of The Realm

After killing the Fourth Sovereign, the Five-Headed Demonic Spider immediately spun some poison webs around the surroundings....

The Fifth Sovereign of Sky Prison Sect didn't come as he was crippled. The Second, Sixth, Seventh, and Eighth Sovereign had all fallen. Now, the Fourth Sovereign was dead as well.

Out of the eight Sovereigns, only the Eldest Sovereign, Tianyu Liangyi, and Third Sovereign remained as of now. Those from the Sky Prison Sect, the ones who were stunned by Qing Shui's flock of demonic beasts, weren't able to collect their thoughts, since they were once again caught by the gigantic Five-Headed Demonic Spider.

Once again, there were ten casualties in the surrounding. Qing Shui held a 10,000 Years Coldsteel Bead in his hand as he stared at the Third Sovereign of Sky Prison Sect. As long as he settled the Third Sovereign, he could basically consider this battle won.

Tianyu Liangyi was now on the verge of spurring blood. He was feeling grief, fury and some other indescribable feeling. His heart felt desolated to the point where life or death no longer impacted him.

Tianyu Liangyi stood dazed on the spot with an enormous golden sabre in his hand. Although, his aura slowly oozed from his body

into his surroundings, especially into that enormous golden sabre.

“Oh no! He is about to breakthrough!” Mu Clan’s old man suddenly yelled before dashing towards Tianyu Liangyi in lightning speed. He swung the long rod in his hand towards Tianyu Liangyi’s head.

“You are courting death!”

The Third Sovereign of Sky Prison Sect immediately stood in front of Tianyu Liangyi. The Sky Prison Sabre in his hand blocked the blow from the long rod. Furthermore, he actually managed to repel Mu Clan’s old man.

He repelled him very agilely. This surprised Qing Shui, who was standing at one side. The Third Sovereign of Sky Prison Sect seemed to be much stronger than the Second Sovereign. He knew that this was a chance and he must kill his opponent. It would certainly bring him a lot of troubles otherwise.

Vajra Subdues Demons!

Fiery Golden Eyes!

Emperor’s Qi!

Mu Clan’s old man dashed ahead once again and swung his rod downwards.

“Sky Prison Trap!”

A trail of Dark Qi was seen surrounding the Third Sovereign of Sky Prison Sect. A brutal wave of energy rose fiercely and his sword struck towards the Mu Clan’s old man.

A violet thunderbolt abruptly streaked across, locking the Third Sovereign of Sky Prison Sect on the spot. While Mu Clan’s old man swept unrivalled through a thousand enemy troops just like before, completely annihilating them.

Pu!

Just like the sound made when a watermelon was smashed, a dull noise rang out. A terrified look flashed across the Third Sovereign’s face for a split moment before his head got smashed in....

The Third Sovereign of Sky Prison Sect died!

Poison webs!

Right at this moment, the poisonous web that Qing Shui had the Five-Headed Demonic Spider spray towards Tianyu Liangyi was about to catch him. Just then, a golden light flashed out from Tianyu Liangyi, and the poison webs that were about to trap him were held still in mid air.

Mu Clan's old man once again raised his rod towards Tianyu Liangyi without any hesitation.

The long rod struck out with dark clouds. This was a full force blow from Mu Clan's old man. He knew that Tianyu Liangyi was breaking through. It would've been disastrous if he weren't able to kill him before he broke through. Therefore, he struck out with all his might. Even if it couldn't kill him, it should've at least heavily injured him.

Pow!

A golden light flashed and knocked Mu Clan's old man back, so much that blood leaked out from the corner of his mouth. This made Qing Shui realize that things were getting a little bad.

He put away his Thunderous Beast and most of the demonic beasts, then handed over a bottle of medicinal pills to Mu Clan's old man. He ordered Mu Qing, "Quick! Send everyone into the formation!"

Screech!

Roar!

Qing Shui held the Poison Dragon Dagger in his hand and sped towards the remaining people. The Five-Headed Demonic Spider followed closely behind him.

Nine Palace Steps!

He took out the Thunder God. Under the state of his full strength, Qing Shui was like a tiger among a flock of sheeps. He exhibited the Nine Palace Steps to its peak. The massacre had begun.

He was feeling very relaxed even though the situation was tense. This was because the so-called Sky Prison Sabre Formation was no match for Qing Shui's current Nine Palace Steps. By the time Qing Shui returned to his original position, those people had only started to collapse.

Mu Qing and the others hadn't even entered the formation yet. They were stunned by Qing Shui's action, and the Mu Clan's old man had an inconceivable look on his face. That move was like an art that was so divine that it could rival mother nature. It was also executed skillfully, as if done by the spirits. Within its profoundness was a desolate killing intent. It was a move that shouldn't have appeared among humans....

Qing Shui held the Thunder God in one hand and the Poison Dragon Dagger in the other. He had put away all of his demonic beasts after he returned.

"Get in quickly. Old man, you get in too!" Qing Shui spoke slowly to Mu Clan's old man.

He seemed to have realized something when he saw Tianyu Liangyi break through earlier. It made him understood a little

more about his Nine Palace Steps. He had discovered that it had only really been raised by a huge step in its realm when he exhibited the skill earlier.

He now understood the things which he didn't previously. It was as if he was looking through a thin sheet of window film previously; able to see, yet unclear. Now, the window film had been ripped and he was able to see everything clearly. This was akin to a huge breakthrough in the realm.

This was also the reason Qing Shui wished to battle Tianyu Liangyi with his own strength alone. He felt that he should be able to defend himself, and could even fasten on him. He wasn't sure if he could kill him though.

"I'm an old man, I don't have much time to live. Perhaps I can help you out a lot. This is for you, it might come in handy." The Mu Clan's old man handed over ten demonic beasts' crystal cards to Qing Shui.

Qing Shui and the others stood at the entrance of the formation in a distance. The rest had entered the formation, except for Mu Qing. Qing Shui knew there was no point in saying much, thus he gave up on trying to persuade her.

He stared at Tianyu Liangyi, who still had a faint layer of golden light on him. The Sky Prison Sect had deployed about a thousand elites and there was only one remaining. Regardless of everything, he was already considered defeated.

He would still be defeated even if he were to kill everyone in here, since Sky Prison Sect was basically considered gone. Although he still had some energy left in him, and there were two more powerful members in the sect, the Sky Prison Sect would vanish in the next ten years or so.

That was because those two elderly men's days were numbered. Nowadays, the Sky Prison Sect had to rely on Tianyu Liangyi, the eight sovereigns, and their underlings. Now, they were all dead. The link binding the chain had been broken, and was the most important link.

Meteor Smash!

Qing Shui unleashed an extremely poisonous hidden weapon on Tianyu Liangyi, who was standing very still. He was hoping to find out if he was able to kill his opponent, but the outcome made him feel helpless.

He didn't expect that Tianyu Liangyi would be put into an invincible state during his breakthrough. It was similar to Qing Shui's Divinity Protection, but the time for this was surprisingly lengthy. It had been more than three breaths of time.

Qing Shui might as well stop and silently wait for his opponent to breakthrough. It should be very quick. This Tianyu Liangyi was the strongest among the few of them, so he felt a little uneasy. Now that he had broken through, he should be as powerful as the two super powerful men within their sect.

Another two breaths of time passed. The golden light on Tianyu Liangyi's body suddenly became even more magnificent. A wave of powerful energy erupted abruptly in all directions!

“Ahhh.....”

A frantic shout as Tianyu Liangyi opened his eyes. He scanned the surroundings with his bloodshot eyes and stared dead into Qing Shui's eyes.

Although he was immobilized during his breakthrough, he was well aware of the events occurring around him. He now hated this young man to the core, so much that he wanted to hack him into pieces. Nothing could diminish the hatred in his heart.

“Damn you! Everyone in here shall die!”

His voice was chilling to the bone and overflowing with deep hatred. Tianyu Liangyi's heart was bleeding. When he came here, he wasn't bothered by the Mu Clan at all. He didn't take them seriously at all. But now...

Qing Shui could feel Tianyu Liangyi's killing intent from the distance. The feeling was so intense that it was almost about to come true. He didn't dare to be reckless, as he knew the next attack from his opponent would be extremely incisive.

“Haha! Didn't you plan on doing this from the very beginning? Damn it! Who exactly should be dead?” Qing Shui stared at Tianyu

Liangyi and said scornfully.

“Go to hell!”

Tianyu Liangyi shouted. A golden light flashed from his enormous golden sabre as it struck towards Qing Shui at lightning speed.

Fast!

Too Fast!

Qing Shui shifted his body and had barely avoided it. He then swallowed the Gale Pellet without any delay. He felt a chill down his spine and was covered in a layer of cold sweat. Due to the previous strike, it felt like a bit of gamble to use the Nine Palace Steps.

Next, he took out an Agility-Enhancing Fruit and ingested it.

This young man had unexpectedly dodged a heavy strike from Tianyu Liangyi. It was a little unbelievable. The footwork of his opponent was too miraculous and inconceivable.

Tianyu Liangyi once again slashed dozens of times towards Qing Shui, only to discover that his opponent had easily evaded his every slash. This angered him all the more and he was in disbelief. He had broken through to the strength of Grade Two Martial Emperor and assumed he would manage to cripple him with a

strike. Such a result was very normal with the disparity between their strengths. He thought the first dodge was just pure luck, but after dozens of consecutive slashes, he felt that this young man in front of him wasn't even a human. He was a heaven-defying monster.

Qing Shui was burning inside now. The thrill had calmed down. Although he would've been slightly faster under the effects of the medicinal pill, the most important one was the Nine Palace Steps. Within the Nine Palace, the distance seemed like it could be remote or near. Qing Shui now felt the frightening speed from before was just so-so. He didn't feel that he was fast, but he slowly discovered that his opponent was not fast either. Mu Qing and Mu Clan's old man, who were standing outside, stared blankly at Qing Shui's illusionary and calm figure. Their mind went blank.

The miraculous Nine Palace Steps!

Qing Shui had now taken control of another level of the realm. Perhaps one level deeper into the realm. He was the Lord of Nine Palace!

This realm would make him the Lord of Nine Palace. In the Nine Palace, he was the king, the Lord. For the current Nine Palace Steps realm, Qing Shui could easily defend himself as long as there wasn't a large disparity between him and the opponent.

Qing Shui hid calmly. The smile on his face was getting more relaxed and satisfied. To be tempered under such circumstances where one's life was deeply threatened, it was the most convenient to breakthrough. Easiest to improve by leaps and bounds and to

achieve realization.

He had even forgotten what he wanted to do right now. He only wanted things to stay like this longer because he felt that his Nine Palace Steps realm was still growing slowly. It was very important to slowly strengthen it.

“Is this all you’ve got?” A scornful voice came from Qing Shui.

Tianyu Liangyi felt powerless and despaired right now. He was so old, his eternal peaceful mind was now extremely restless. No one would be able to calm down when such incident had befallen them.

Pu!

He spat out a mouthful of fresh blood. His fury had caused damage to his heart and internal organs. It could only be caused by extreme furiousness. Tianyu Liangyi calmed down and stopped going after Qing Shui. He held the golden sabre as if he was building up his power.

Qing Shui didn’t weaken his opponent because he lacked the time from the beginning. But as time went on, he grew accustomed to it. Moreover, this was a chance to especially temper himself. It was only now that Qing Shui felt like he reached the stage of half-step Qiankun.

AST 915 – “Lord Of Nine Palace”, Kill!

Qing Shui took advantage of the battle that allowed the Nine Palace Steps to improve rapidly into the Lord of Nine Palace realm.

It was only then that Qing Shui was deemed the rightful owner of the ‘Nine Palace Steps’. He was finally able to truly grasp the quintessence of the Nine Palace Steps, a feat that thrilled him. After all, the Nine Palace Steps was undeniably strong.

“Path of Sky Prison!”

A black silhouette-like halo flashed from Tianyu Liangyi’s body, a subtle gleam of golden light bursting outwards towards the surroundings. Next, his golden pupils shot a light at Qing Shui that locked him down fiercely.

“Sky Prison Bloodbath!”

A flicker of a silhouette flashed across Qing Shui with an instantaneous force that could slice the heavens apart.

Qing Shui’s pupils constricted as he tried to move out of harm’s way. However, when he attempted to do so, he realized his movements had been slowed down considerably. He knew that this was due to Tianyu Liangyi’s odd eyes. Moreover, his opponent seemed to have his strength boosted by multiple levels – his aura felt distinctly different than before.

“Qing Shui, move quickly! He’s burning his life force to increase his power and try to kill you! Move away quickly.....” The old man from the Mu Clan shouted as he threw a bunch of Crystal Demonic Beast Cards at Tianyu Liangyi to delay for more time.

Even though Qing Shui could evade Tianyu Liangyi’s attack the first time, he realized it was quite difficult to do the same given his current situation. The second blade was coming his way, and this time it was undodgeable. Time seemed to pass slowly, but this had all happened in under a minute.

Qing Shui retrieved his Poison Dragon Dagger and promptly swapped to the Violet Gold Divine Shield.

Shield Attack!

Godly Armor Shield!

Divinity Protection!

With a stomp on the ground, Mu Qing, who had been coming to his aid, was swiftly swept back by the aftershock of the force.

Bang!

Chrriikk.....

A sharp and uncomfortable noise pierced through the air as Qing

Shui was bashed backward, blood gushing out from his body. The Violet Gold Divine Shield had been shattered completely, but the fist-sized violet stone had been knocked loose, rolling to the far side of the battlefield.

A nasty cut appeared from his stomach to his chest, blood spewing from the opening, almost deep enough to reveal his inner organs. Qing Shui could feel his life force draining vigorously from his body as well.

With no time to lose, he quickly took out a piece of the Golden Buddha Aura Lotus and devoured it like a madman. As soon as he ate it, a blinding stream of light enveloped his vital organs like a protective shield, acting as a cork to prevent his life force from draining from his body.

While enduring the extreme pain of his gaping wound, he tapped a few acupoints on his body and applied the Jinchuang Powder to his gash. He used the beast skin of a Martial Saint level beast as a 'bandage' and wrapped it around the wound. The skin bandage being stained quickly from the blood oozing from the cut.

All of this happened within two breaths of time.

"How can this be? How is it possible?" Tianyu Liangyi was in shock, albeit for a moment. Qing Shui had settled his wound very quickly, but Tianyu Liangyi realized he had missed an opportunity to kill his opponent during the two breaths of time Qing Shui had taken to mend his wound.

Tianyu Liangyi's life force was still draining away, because the 'Path of Sky Prison' was one of no return. Once the ability was unleashed, he could only use his killer move to try and annihilate his opponent at the price of his death. He was ready to die along with everyone else in this battle.

However, his killer move hadn't been able to kill Qing Shui successfully. He needed just a little bit more to kill him – it would've been enough if it hadn't been for that damned shield. Tianyu Liangyi wielded his sabre once more and rushed towards Qing Shui with the unwillingness to give up.

The previous assault had been his most powerful one, but Qing Shui had possessed that miraculous shield to defend himself from getting killed by the invincible force of the former could shield himself against his assault this time. Although he couldn't unleash a force quite as deadly as he did previously, he could still inflict heavy damage on Qing Shui. As long as he could take him out, nothing else really mattered to him.

Descending Heaven Talisman!

Fiery Golden Eyes!

Emperor's Qi!

At this point, Qing Shui decided to use everything, as he faced his opponent who possessed a powerful ability. However, Qing Shui's debuff abilities were more frightful, to the point of stopping Tianyu Liangyi completely in his tracks after being hit with the

weakening abilities. Tianyu Liangyi turned pale, but after stopping for a brief moment, he continued to rush towards Qing Shui with his sabre in hand.

He couldn't accept the turn of events and was more than determined to fight Qing Shui, despite already sealing his fate to death. The Path of Sky Prison was a one-way ticket to death, so he was prepared to die for his cause.

This time, Qing Shui evaded Tianyu Liangyi's attack in a calm fashion. The sabre attack was the same one as before, yet the force of the attack had weakened drastically compared to the previous strikes.

If he could evade this attack, it would mean that Tianyu Liangyi would die without successfully being able to kill Qing Shui. The killing move was certain to kill Qing Shui if it landed, but even so, he had not succeeded. Supposedly, no one could match up to his formation techniques, but apparently this was not true, as he looked at the formation that had been set up by the young man in front of him.

He had failed by the hands of a formation technique. This young man had created a formation he could never figure out. He had been careless, and that led to his defeat, because he had taken lightly his opponent's formation in the beginning of the fight.....

Perhaps this was his miscalculation, but he would never die peacefully knowing that it had been his fault all along.

“I won’t accept this!”

Tianyu Liangyi tilted his head towards the heavens and roared loudly. There was a hint of feebleness and regret in his voice as he exploded, his body shredding into pieces before vanishing from the air.

Qing Shui watched Tianyu Liangyi as he vanished from the air. He finally felt a sense of relief after knowing that he had defeated Tianyu Liangyi, a man deemed too dangerous in this world. If Qing Shui didn’t have the Golden Buddha Aura Lotus at that time, he would have died more than a few times already.

The fight had ended, and his intense spiritual and mental fatigue began to crawl back.

“Qing Shui!”

A soft sensation wrapped around his hand as a celestial-like voice rang out. He turned his head and, to his surprise, Mu Qing was standing by his side. Her expression of shock and deep concern immensely imprinted onto Qing Shui’s mind.

She didn’t care if she was tainted with the blood on his hand.....

“I’m fine!” Qing Shui chuckled while holding onto Mu Qing’s hand. At that moment when he had been struck by Tianyu Liangyi’s deadly attack, he had seen this woman coming towards

him without hesitation. He didn't know what to feel back then, but she had indeed leaped towards him during the battle. Perhaps in that sort of situation, he had thought that only his mother or his wives would risk their lives for him. After all, being able to risk one's life for another required an immense amount of courage.....

The old man and the members of the Mu Clan were already surrounding Qing Shui to check on him. When they saw Mu Qing holding hands with Qing Shui, they couldn't help but let out a few chuckles. It was only then that Mu Qing realized that she was holding Qing Shui's hand and immediately released her grip.

As Mu Qing lowered her head, she could see Qing Shu, whose blood was everywhere on his body. Without hesitating, she held onto Qing Shui's hand once more and said, "How is your wound?"

"It's fine, I'm an alchemist myself, you know." Qing Shui let out a few laughs.

"I will go with you and tend to your wounds" Mu Qing said as she bit her lips, feeling the blood rushing to her face intensely.

The other members laughed teasingly as they left to tend to their own matters after realizing Qing Shui was fine . There were many things that needed to be done, including looking after the number of casualties from the Mu Clan.

Qing Shui gave them an abundant supply of Jinchuang Powder to treat the injured members.

“Qing Shui, this is something precious that fell out from your broken shield. Keep it for next time, when you need it most,” said the old man from the Mu Clan as he handed Qing Shui a violet stone.

Qing Shui didn't expect the Violet Gold Divine Shield that he had used for years had shattered and broken. He received the stone from the old man, and with one glance, immediately threw it into his Realm of the Violet Jade Immortal to keep it safe.

At least something had been left from the broken fragments of his shield this time. Last time, there had been no remnants from the Lunar Silk Garment whatsoever when it had been torn apart. In any case, he still felt bitter as he remembered the Violet Gold Divine Shield being shattered into fragments.

Suddenly, he remembered Mu Fengyang's words. He had been told that a Grade One Martial Emperor was known to possess the strength of 100 stars without depending on external powers or effects. Somehow Qing Shui was able to understand what he meant because once a cultivator broke through to Martial Emperor, they would not be able to depend on power from outside sources. The weapons and armors of a Martial Saint wouldn't be able to handle the might of a Martial Emperor. At the same time, lower grade gemstones and medicinal pills with temporary effects would lose their usefulness and purpose as well.

Most powerful cultivators depended on their fists in a fight, using no weapons to inflict pain on their opponents. Ordinary weapons would not be able to endure the ruthless power of a Martial Emperor, and the only weapons that could match up to

such power were divine weapons of myths and legends. Clearly, these formidable weapons were not easy to find either.

Because of this, special metal materials and extraordinary blacksmiths would be sought after by many cultivators as they grew in power. After all, weapons with formidable abilities were necessary and crucial when one reached the realm of a Martial Emperor.

It would be easy to acquire a weapon for a powerful Martial Emperor, but getting a weapon of daunting power would not be an easy feat, especially for lower-level Martial Emperors. Divine armors and defensive artifacts were scarce in number. Although the amount of materials in the World of the Nine Continents was considered abundant, blacksmiths who could forge such precious materials were few in number.

He looked at the giant golden sabre nearby and immediately kept it for himself. Mu Qing then quickly pulled him away to tend to his wounds, followed by a row of cheers from the young people in the Mu Clan. As the laughter accumulated, Mu Qing began to hasten her footsteps as she dragged Qing Shui along with her.

Qing Shui remained silent, as he allowed Mu Qing to pull him into her building instead of his room.

Mu Qing's face was flushed red. She didn't know what to feel, and she suspected that some members of the Mu Clan would think that the two of them were in some kind of intimate relationship.....

This building belonged to Mu Qing, so on most days, no one would come unless they had urgent business with her. Most of the time, there would only be cleaners coming by to tidy up the place when she wasn't around.

The decorations inside the building were simple and elegant. Landscapes and portraits, as well as calligraphy were hung across the walls. Coincidentally, the decorations in this building were pretty much the same as those in the Azure Cloud Pavilion. Qing Shui almost doubted himself when he first entered the building with Mu Qing.

“Let me treat your wounds” said Mu Qing. She immediately grabbed a medical kit for Qing Shui as soon as she entered the room.

“You know about medicine?” Qing Shui showed interest in her skill, as he smiled pleasantly towards Mu Qing.

“I’m not a very good alchemist and I’m still an early stage physician, mind you.” Mu Qing replied with a laugh.

Having some basic medical ability was common in the World of the Nine Continents. Most of the population were martial cultivators who would periodically get injured, so knowing some general medical knowledge was basically a necessity. Sometimes, they could even save their own lives when treatment was needed immediately.

“I’m okay, so it’s fine!” Qing Shui smiled.

“Even so, I need to clean your wounds and cover them up. You lost so much blood, so there’s no way you’re fine” said Mu Qing with an insistent tone. When she first saw his wound, she was taken aback by the severity of the cut. The blade had cut too deeply into his skin, and for Qing Shui to be alive after receiving such wound was a miracle. Having assured herself that he would remain alive, her heart calmed down and was becoming bolder by the minute.....

“Let me do it myself!” Qing Shui said quickly.

“Just let me bandage you up.” Mu Qing spoke softly as she gripped the medical kit tightly.

Qing Shui was persistent at first, but eventually nodded his head and remained silent. He could feel her fluctuating emotions and kind intentions. Mu Qing had decided to tend to his wounds, but would not bother him with unnecessary things after that. She only wanted to hold on to her memories with him a bit longer by helping him with some things for his sake.

Qing Shui loosened his bandage and took off his bloodstained clothes. Mu Qing wasn’t embarrassed as she looked at the horrible wound on his topless body. A man was baring his well-defined body in front of her, his bare shoulders finely chiseled against the realistic structure of his refined muscles, yet all she could see was the exposed wound on his chest.

AST 916 – Violet Star Stone, Penta-Color

Ancient Art Of Forging Technique

Looking at the bloody wound, she took up a fresh towel and submerged it in a bucket of warm water with a natural motion, yet in a way as if she had never treated a wound before. She then took the wet towel and cleaned the blood surrounding the wound and proficiently applied medicine to the wound. After that, she unwrapped a new roll of bandage and began re-wrapping the treated wound with the bandage.

Qing Shui's wounds had actually healed up for the most part but the surface still appeared scarred and pulsing with blood. The wound was healing from the inside toward the outer skin. It would take a little bit more time for the surface to seal up into a scar. The Golden Buddha Aura Lotus was quite miraculous in nature but even miracles would take time to act despite it only being briefly.

Qing Shui glanced at the woman fixing his wound with the bandage while having her head lowered. She was a woman of desirable beauty and he felt quite close to this beauty not in a sense of distance but spiritually. He didn't feel this way because she was tending to his wound, but because of the accumulated effort she had displayed over the course of their interaction from when they first met each other.

Sometimes it would be easy to be touched just by simple gestures.

“Miss, I'm going to rest. You should rest early too,” Qing Shui said as he casually put on his clothes. She had to go back anyway and he had planned to go into the Realm of the Violet Jade

Immortal to recover in the meantime, because he was worried that the two old demons would come back for him sooner or later.

Even so, it would take a few days or possibly a few weeks for them to come back!

“Rest well then. Be careful of your wounds. I will call you when dinner’s ready,” Mu Qing said softly, as she glanced at the lethargic expression on Qing Shui’s face.

He nodded and left the building after that. Mu Qing watched his back with an indescribable feeling as he walked away, unsure of what to feel of the current situation.

Qing Shui returned to the building opposite of hers, closed the doors and locked himself in his bedroom before entering the Realm of the Violet Jade Immortal.

For the following days inside the realm, he intended to recuperate slowly and quietly while cultivating his skills to pass the time. When he entered the Realm of the Violet Jade Immortal, the first two things he could see were the violet stone and the golden Sky Prison Sabre he had thrown in earlier.

Qing Shui approached the items and sat on the ground. He held the giant sabre in his hands, determining the materials used to forge this weapon to be of high quality through a brief moment of analysis. A weapon of upper quality was naturally powerful, which explained why the sabre was able to shatter his Violet Gold Divine Shield quite easily.

The Violet Gold Divine Shield was an ancient artifact and now the shield was no more. Qing Shui used to think that the Violet Gold Divine Shield would never break but it seemed he was wrong. He couldn't quite believe that the shield had actually shattered – the reality seemed hard to comprehend for now.

Qing Shui quickly used the Heavenly Vision Technique on the sabre!

Sky Prison Sabre: Weapon forged from the extraterrestrial meteorites with the ability to triple the user's power.

A great weapon indeed!

Qing Shui stared at the giant sabre for a good minute before he sighed heavily. The Thunder God could only double his power at most and it was considered his most powerful weapon to date. Unfortunately, the Sky Prison Sabre was unsuitable to use, at least in Qing Shui's case.

Not everyone could use the Sky Prison Sabre that could gain an increase to the user's power and have their power quadrupled in an instant. One must raise their sabre mastery to a certain degree, as well as having a perfect compatibility with the sabre before using it in battle.....

Much like the Dragon-Headed Cane and the simple 'stick' he had acquired from the Flowerfruit Mountain, Qing Shui could only analyze these weapons but not use them as his main weapons. He

could however use them in another way, which was to dismantle the weapons and use them as materials for tempering his own weapons.

The Sky Prison Sabre was forged from meteorites but to Qing Shui, the material of the weapon itself was nothing more special than any other meteorite he had seen. Unless he had planned to give it to someone else as a gift, Qing Shui could smelt the weapon and use it to forge new equipment or temper it with the other artifacts.

Qing Shui took another look at the Sky Prison Sabre but ultimately decided to put it aside for now, as he currently didn't have the capability to smelt the weapon into forging materials. It was a bit unfortunate to smelt such a powerful weapon into forging materials in any case.

After that, he picked up the warm violet stone that was the size of a cobble. This material was left by the Violet Gold Divine Shield when it shattered. It was the first time he had really felt the stone when he held it in his hand.

However, he wasn't quite sure why there would be a stone inside the Violet Gold Divine Shield. Could there be more secrets that he hadn't uncovered about the shield?

The stone wasn't exactly round in shape, yet it wasn't exactly an oval either. It was more like the shape of a gourd, only gradually slimmer at the ends. The stone was pure violet, much like the color of the Soulshake Bell.

What was this?

Qing Shui was bewildered for a while but continued to use his Heavenly Vision Technique to look closer.

Violet Star Stone!

It was a stone he did not recognize at all. Fortunately, there was a description, so he continued to read it.

Violet Star Stone: A legendary miraculous stone, one of the most priceless stones in the world. It has the ability to allow smiths to advance to another level in the realm of forging by placing the Violet Star Stone into forging materials during the forging process.

Qing Shui's hand shook as he held the valuable stone. He didn't know such stones existed in this world. This was essentially godsend to his current problem.....

He continued to look at the words below the description, which explained the similarity between the breakthrough in the Art of Forging and breakthrough in power. On a certain level of breakthrough, one must possess an unique or special item to push the breakthrough forward to the next level. This Violet Star Stone was one of the more valuable items that existed in the world, as it could allow smiths to advance to the next level during the forging process with its miraculous energy. The smiths would be able to comprehend the crucial key to the breakthrough of the next level, effectively increasing the level of forging to another level.

Qing Shui recalled that his Ancient Art of Forging had been stuck in the Quad-color for a long time – unable to reach a breakthrough. He finally knew that the Ancient Art of Forging also required an external force to push through the next level, just like the breakthrough of his power. At the same time, he was also wondering if a breakthrough was possible in a circumstance where the external force was absent.

However, he didn't wish to test his theory as he already had a Violet Star Stone. He had a feeling that the breakthrough would play a crucial role for him and the upcoming battle, because there were two more powerful cultivators from the Sky Prison Sect that he needed to destroy.

Qing Shui put down the precious Violet Star Stone for now. He still wasn't ready to forge yet due to his condition – his body needed ample rest and recovery. At that moment, Qing Shui finally felt at ease with himself after a brief moment of gloominess.

Even though the wound hadn't completely healed, he could still do simple cultivation practice, like the Taichi Fist. The Back Connecting First however, was a bit too extreme for his current state. The Golden Buddha Aura Lotus was still in effect, partially recovered in just one and a half days. In three days, he would be recovered for most things.

Three to five days of recuperation was adequate. Qing Shui laid on the ground and recalled his memories about forging. He had already reached a terrifying level of forging after countless times of refining, tempering, smelting and forging artifacts and materials.

The Quad-color Art of Forging was still powerful nonetheless.

With so much time to pass, Qing Shui decided to train his fist techniques for the next few days. Then he would enter the Realm of the Violet Jade Immortal to take a look around. Seeing the demonic beasts roaming the grounds of the realm had left Qing Shui overwhelmed with a sense of achievement and satisfaction. Everything inside the Realm of the Violet Jade Immortal belonged to him – those were his essentials and the demonic beasts were his arms and legs.

Qing Shui passed his time leisurely by drinking some wine and eating good food. He had quite a bit of freedom during his time in the Realm of the Violet Jade Immortal as well. When he had nothing to do, he would go and view the Portraits of Beauty he had collected. Unfortunately, he could not enter the dream among the sea of flowers as freely as he wished and until today, he still had no clue as to what that phenomenon was about.

Just like the situation with Di Chen, Di Qing and followed by the woman in the crystal coffin, he would always be pulled into the same dream-like state unconsciously. But after he attempted to look at Di Chen's portrait once more, he couldn't enter the dream among the sea of flowers like he did the first time. It was the same case for Canghai Mingyue and Wenren Wu-shuang too. Initially, he wanted to communicate with his wives back at home through this method but it seemed like it was impossible to do so.

And so, five days had passed. Qing Shui had already begun his cultivation training on the third day after he felt a bit better. Two days later, his power had fully restored with his strength returning

to its peak form. Despite his recovery, he hadn't started forging with the Violet Star Stone yet.

At the moment, Qing Shui seemed to be in a troubled state. The stone must be inserted into an item during the forging process but what had him frowning with a deep furrow was the choice of equipment for tempering – either the Thunder God or the Big Dipper Sword. The Big Dipper Sword could be used to unleash the Sword of Sixth Wave technique, whereas the Thunder God could be used to unleash a deadly strike on his opponents.

He was a bit indecisive right now because whichever weapon he chose to refine with the Violet Star Stone would achieve a breakthrough to the next level, reaping a greater benefit for the weapon itself. In any case, he would be able to gain a substantial benefit should either the weapon become stronger and more powerful.

After pondering for awhile, he ultimately decided to temper the Thunder God!

Qing Shui used some decent materials from the Realm of the Violet Jade Immortal to warm up his forging skills before starting the tempering process on the Thunder God. Essentially, he intended to temper the Thunder God by quenching it, thus cleansing the impurities from the weapon to avoid unnecessary interference in the later process.

Currently, he was overwhelmed with excitement after he had placed the Violet Star Stone next to the Thunder God. He began using the Primordial Flames and started refining the weapon and

the stone by smelting them. The Violet Star Stone would melt away a little but only for a bit. After that, he took a small portion of the melted stone and added the liquid to the Thunder God one drop at a time.

All of that seemed tedious and time consuming because it would require a long period of time for the stone to melt completely. Ordinary blacksmiths would not be able to melt the Violet Star Stone without a special kind of fire to breakdown the composition of the valuable stone.

Qing Shui's power was still fairly adequate to smelt the Violet Star Stone but with tremendously exhausting effort. The smelting process was also a testament to Qing Shui's endurance in using the Primordial Flames, which he had continuously done for three days, until the stone had completely melted into liquid form.

When the Thunder God was made to fuse with the liquefied Violet Star Stone, Qing Shui found himself extremely nervous and his heartbeat rose to an abnormal rate. He was afraid that something would go wrong during the fusion – and that his Thunder God would go awry, which could lead to its inability to break through or worse, breaking the Thunder God entirely.....

In such a circumstance of fusing materials to a powerful weapon, paranoia was normal.

The liquefied stone slowly enveloped the Thunder God as it fused into the weapon. Qing Shui expanded his spiritual sense to get a hold of any changes during the fusion. At that moment, he thought he had seen the silhouette of an old blacksmith forging the

weapon, with each strike from of the hammer clearly visible inside Qing Shui's consciousness.

The strength and force instilled in each hammer strike, the form. Everything was distinctive and clear inside his sea of consciousness.

The imagery of the hammer strike flashed clearly into his mind and Qing Shui began to follow the striking form unconsciously, almost an exact copy of the old blacksmith's movements. With the spiritual sense in its active state and Qing Shui's retentive memory, he was able to learn the forms exceedingly fast. One could also say that he had inherited the blacksmith's form through the extraordinary ability of his spiritual sense.

The forging process of the old blacksmith was a meticulous procedure, yet Qing Shui was enjoying himself, as if he was a sponge absorbing water at a ridiculous rate. He was absorbing every single bit of knowledge like a madman, leaving nothing behind.

The forging process inside his consciousness was nearing the end. He had almost completed the process with his eyes closed, with every hammer strike perfectly landing on the Thunder God. Qing Shui was using another Thunder God, he currently had two in his possession.

When the last hammer strike fell onto the Thunder God, a gleaming light of five colors flashed from the hammer as he lifted the forging hammer, which promptly forced Qing Shui to open his eyes. The hammer stopped in mid-air as he stood there looking

elated at the newly formed Thunder God.

The Ancient Art of Forging had achieved a breakthrough towards Penta-color, as evidenced by the gleaming of the five colored light emitted from the hammer.

The Thunder God was violet in color, with a subtle layer of violet halo enveloping the weapon. The strong aura and a mysterious power of the Thunder God had Qing Shui's heart racing as he shivered with excitement.

Currently, the Thunder God seemed like it had a more obstructive force than it used to. Just by the appearance of the weapon, he could tell that the current Thunder God was stronger and more formidable. The aura alone was enough to strike terror to one's heart.

He couldn't tell much from observation through with the naked eye, so he quickly activated his Heavenly Vision Technique to analyze the weapon.

Violet Star Thunder God!

“Hmm, even the name's changed!”

The weapon could triple the user's power as well a 10% increase to the attack speed. Additional skill: Ten Thousand Great Thunderbolt.

Ten Thousand Great Thunderbolt: Ability to paralyze opponents for a short period of time.

AST 917 – Violet Star Thunder God, Violet Jade Sword, Raging Blow

Qing Shui was very agitated right now, to have his powers increased to three times stronger. Thinking of that golden colored Sky Prison Sabre, it seemed that for a weapon of this level, increase in abilities to be three times stronger was a benchmark.

It should be a standard used by a Martial Emperor.

This increased one's powers to become three times stronger than what they originally were.

Qing Shui was very happy. He read down to the battle technique it came equipped with, the Ten Thousand Great Thunderbolt. This battle technique was very powerful but it was a pity that it didn't have the paralyzing effect when using it against powerful Peak Martial Saints, let alone those who were early Martial Emperors. Therefore, Qing Shui had not used the Ten Thousand Great Thunderbolt battle technique, which was very powerful.

Now that it had leveled up and became a Violet Star Thunder God hammer, he wondered if the Ten Thousand Great Thunderbolt could be used once again and if it would have a temporary paralyzing effect on early Martial Emperors.

Qing Shui was full of anticipation. After all, this battle technique was very powerful and when used appropriately, he would be able to kill the opponent instantly.

After a few days, Qing Shui was now exhausted. However, he didn't rest and instead started to forge after recovering some of his powers. He only used good materials in his forging since he was planning to strengthen his Penta-Color Rainbow Art of Forging.

He used good materials to forge a sword and even added things like violet jade. Although he was strengthening his forging skills, it still depleted quite a large amount of mental effort since he would have to be fully focused. He wanted to strengthen his Penta-Colored stage as soon as possible. Otherwise, it would affect his forging in the future.

After a series of clinks and clanks from the forging, an entire day had passed by. However, it was not finished...

This was very normal. Some weapons would take a very long time to forge and it might even be segregated into a few stages. Therefore, Qing Shui knew that he couldn't be thinking of forging a few weapons when he had time. After all, the time and energy required were still a lot. He could forge an item once in awhile but now, he couldn't care about anything else. He needed to strengthen the foundation for the Penta-Colored stage.

Pa!

Suddenly, the sword he was forging shattered. The hammer Qing Shui was swinging stopped in mid-air and he sighed, bringing it down and went deep into thought.

Earlier, the success of the forging of the Thunder God was due to the Violet Star Stone. It was very normal to be failing at this stage. After taking a rest, he started forging once again and continued to fail.

Each time he failed, he would waste a lot of precious materials. Although the materials that went to waste during the forging process could be melted down and reconstructed, there was plenty of wear and tear. Moreover, some of the materials were for one time use only. This was why forging was an occupation that wasted a lot of money. Top notch blacksmiths would waste countless precious materials, many of which were priceless.

After reforging once again, he would give it some thought, recalling the feeling which he had when he was forging, especially that “old blacksmith’s” actions, expression and such. He would then continue to forge again.

It was just that each time, some minor flaws would result in failures. On the next attempt, Qing Shui would try to ensure that the same flaw was not repeated but there would always be new flaws that could appear, causing him to fail again. Qing Shui would then try to fix the flaw...

Unknowingly, a month passed by. During this time, other than eating and resting, he had spent a large majority of his time on forging. This was very crucial and thus Qing Shui didn’t wish to waste the Violet Star Stone.

...

When a stream of five-colored glow appeared, Qing Shui smiled and put down his hammer, looking at the Violet Jade Sword. It was only until that five-colored glow disappeared before he picked it up to take a look. Not far away from him, there was a huge pile of swords that had been wasted.

The sword was three feet in length and two feet wide. It was completely violet in color, exuding a faint violet glow and appearing very beautiful. It was just that Qing Shui felt that it was more suitable for ladies. The main ingredient used was violet jade.

He had succeeded. Qing Shui held onto the Violet Jade Sword fondly and looked at it with his Heavenly Vision Technique.

Violet Jade Sword, increases the user's abilities to be two times as strong. Additional status, Violetjade Pureheart!

Violetjade Pureheart: Allow one to avoid the effects of toxins and negative statuses. The effect was related to the user's abilities and spirit energy.

It was no wonder that he had felt a faint cooling aura when he held the Violet Jade Sword earlier. Although Qing Shui could use the Heavenly Vision Technique to check out the stats of weapons, armors and such, most people could only rely on their senses or get a blacksmith's appraisal.

Senior blacksmiths would be able to appraise the abilities of weapons and armor. Old appraisers would be able to able to

estimate the abilities of weapons and armor with their senses if their forging abilities had reached a certain level. Although they might not be able to tell the entire stats, they would be able to tell most of them.

Therefore, when someone got their hands on good items, they would look for old blacksmiths and get their help to appraise. Knowing of their unique abilities would allow them to gain a technique to save lives or kill enemies.

To think that this Violetjade Pureheart had a resistance against poison. As for whether it was fully resistant to all poisons, Qing Shui couldn't say. Things like jade stones were able to neutralize poison to begin with, let alone the precious violet jade.

It was a pity that this sword was useless to him since he had no need for the Violetjade Pureheart. To be able to create a weapon with the Penta-Colored Rainbow Art of Forging which could increase his abilities to be two times stronger, Qing Shui was satisfied. After all, his forging skills had just hit the Penta-Colored stage and it should slowly increase in the future. Moreover, with his current forging ability, he should be able to forge weapons with battle techniques that had the nature of the materials they were forged from. The Violetjade Pureheart's violet jade was one example.

He then forged another two swords that were almost exactly the same. It was just that one of them was slightly wider. Qing Shui was now assured. His Penta-Colored Rainbow Art of Forging has been stabilized and so had his heart.

There was still time. He planned to spend the majority of the rest of his time on the Nine Palace Steps and on using the Violet Star Thunder God.

Qing Shui's physical strength was at 60 stars. With the enhancement of the Diamond Qi, Diamond Protection and Diamond Crossing Rivers, it had reached 120 stars.

Under the effects of the Nature Energy, Unmoving Like A Mountain, Frenzied Bull's Strength, Heavenly Thunder Slash, Shield attack and the Heavenly Talisman, he was able to reach a strength of over 1,000 stars just by holding a Violet Star Thunder God.

With just a Thunder God, his abilities could just barely reach 1,000 stars.

The Combination Sword Technique was only powerful when he was using sword techniques. "Using the hands in place of a sword" was too restrictive. Qing Shui was now very satisfied. Holding onto the Violet Star Thunder God, Qing Shui had a feeling that he would be able to smash a hole in the sky.

What made Qing Shui disappointed was that when he held both the Violet Star Thunder God and the Big Dipper Sword, he realized that only the special effects of one of the weapons could work. Qing Shui had initially thought that if each of his weapons could increase his abilities by three times, he would be even more powerful. Back then, when he got both Thunder Gods, only one of their effects could be used. Right now, his wish was smashed. At the Martial Emperor level, it seemed that many things have to be

reassessed as one's powers seemed to be increasingly dependent on that of his physical body.

Another thing which Qing Shui was most concerned about was that the Violet Star Thunder God didn't only increase his attacks to be three times stronger, even his attacking speed had increased by 10%...

Qing Shui kept thinking about the Raging Blow. Some time was needed for him to perform this skill and it was a bit slow. Although it was not overly slow, when Martial Emperors fought, their speed would be fast as lightning and being just a little slow would make it hard to perform the Raging Blow.

The Raging Blow could be said to be very slow but it was only 10% slower. Qing Shui was well aware of this. Therefore, he was very agitated now. He wanted to be sure if his estimation was true. If he could perform this Raging Blow in battle, it would be different. This was a powerful killing move.

Qing Shui didn't stop cultivating the Raging Blow. This was the most violent battle technique amongst those for hammers in a battle. To him, it felt like it was the combination of all of his powerful hammer techniques.

The time taken to cultivate this Raging Blow was not short. However, given that he had the Raging Blow, the Raging Blow could increase his attacking prowess to be two times as strong as before.

Qing Shui felt that it could make his attacks to be at a strength of 2,000 stars. This was why he was experimenting. If it couldn't be used, he could only suppress it and wait for a chance when he could utilize it.

Thousand Hammer Technique!

Qing Shui gradually performed it with the current Violet Star Thunder God. The huge power up allowed the battle technique to be as if coated with a layer of divine protection. The current Thousand Hammer Technique would definitely be able to astonish many.

Raging Blow!

When Qing Shui suddenly performed this domineering attack, a pitch black hole appeared where the hammer's head was at. There was also a thunderous explosion...

Its speed was acceptable but still a little slow. However, it was slightly slower. Qing Shui was very agitated. As long as he planned it out well, it could still be used. The price to pay for the strong prowess was that it was a little dangerous.

The increase in speed by 10% had a large effect. Even if he didn't use the Raging Blow and chose to use the Thousand Hammer Technique instead, the increase in speed by 10% was still considerably powerful.

The three Violet Jade Swords he forged had no additional enhancement to the user's speed.

Next, although he focused primarily on cultivation, Qing Shui still forged two scythes which had the same attributes as the Violet Jade Sword, completely firming his foundations for the Penta-Colored stage.

He was in no hurry to smelt and refine the Big Dipper Sword. One reason was that Qing Shui could only get the enhancement from one weapon. Another reason was that he had planned to use that wolf's fang, but yet didn't wish to use it so casually. He wished to wait a little longer. He was afraid that the Big Dipper Sword would also end up increasing his prowess by two times. However, with the wolf's fang, Dragon-Headed Cane and others, it should be more powerful.

Seeing that it was about time, he left the Realm of the Violet Jade Immortal.

It was not yet dark and should still be in the late afternoon. After washing up, he changed into a set of clean clothes. His injuries were completely healed but it would still take some time before the scars faded.

The rays from the sunset shone into the hall from the windows. Walking to the hall, Qing Shui suddenly felt that it was very good to be alive. Even the sunlight was an enjoyment.

He took out wine from the Realm of the Violet Jade Immortal,

pouring some for himself as he sat on the couch. Suddenly, his mind was calm as the sea. It was a sudden change to his state of mind.

He knew that his mental state had improved, just like a child's mind turning into that of an adult. He knew that this was brought from the improvement in his cultivation.

It was only now that Qing Shui was considered to have entered the Martial Emperor realm mentally.

Even a ray of sunlight could cause one to go through a slight emotional change and thus result in a spiritual breakthrough. Qing Shui knew that this was related to the previous battle, of having his life put on the line. It was the recollection and after seeing the light from the setting sun, that he had attained a breakthrough.

The setting sun is a beautiful sight but the night is coming.

“Your injuries have yet to recover, you can't drink.”

A graceful and attractive voice rang out. Even after having heard it so many times, Qing Shui still felt that this was an enjoyment. He opened his eyes to see the beauty standing next to him, looking at him appearing to be both happy and reproachful.

AST 918 – Great Wine And Beauty, Ties Are Priceless

“Come, take a seat and have some wine. This wine is quite good.” Qing Shui smiled and poured some for Mu Qing.

Mu Qing helplessly sat down next to Qing Shui and picked up that translucent jade cup. Even the wine in it was translucent like jade, exuding an intoxicating light fragrance.

Drinking it down in one gulp, Mu Qing’s beautiful eyes lit up as she looked at Qing Shui, her eyes filled with disbelief. This was simply unbelievable. Nv`er Hong was astonishing enough to begin with and this wine was clearly many tiers higher than Nv`er Hong. It was light and had a faint fragrance to it. It even gave the feeling that it would seep right into one’s bones.

This was a feeling as if it would cleanse one’s bones, meridian channels and internal organs. This was the reason she had found it unbelievable.

“This was brewed from a variant of the plum blossoms.” Qing Shui smiled and poured her another cup.

“It’s really very nice!” Mu Qing looked at Qing Shui and said, smiling.

“I also think that it’s nice. You can’t find it anywhere else.” Qing Shui smiled and poured her another cup again.

“It’s best to drink less of good stuff.” Mu Qing shook her head slightly, not continuing.

“Why?” Qing Shui smiled and looked at Mu Qing.

“All good things come in extremely small quantities. I don’t want to develop a reliance on it. I’m afraid of getting addicted and yet there’s none to be found. Wouldn’t that be very painful?” Mu Qing smiled and said.

Qing Shui didn’t try to convince her. What she said was similar to how it was when people in his previous life got involved in drugs. This Plum Blossom Wine was much more amazing than the drugs from his previous life but it wouldn’t make one overly reliant on it, unless the person had extremely weak self-restraint. Neither would it make one thin down to their bones.

Moreover, the people in the world of the nine continents had better physiques than the people in his previous life.

“Actually, this thing won’t make you develop a reliance to it. You don’t have to worry.” Qing Shui smiled. Mu Qing didn’t drink anymore but just looked at him quietly. It was because after not seeing him for half a day, she realized that this guy was now unfamiliar to her once again.

This time around, it was a change to his disposition. This man who was younger than her was now like a calm ocean, serene and had an indescribable feeling.

A faint and refreshing aura came from him. It was very nice but wasn't a deadly attraction. However, it was very comfortable. Mu Qing lifted her head and when she saw that Qing Shui was smiling as he looked at her, she couldn't help but blush. Earlier, she was the one who had been staring at him.

Thinking about this, she no longer feared his gaze and just looked at him with a flushed face. After all, he knew her feelings and in his eyes, she must be very thick-skinned...

Qing Shui's smile made Mu Qing blush even more.

"Why are you looking at me like this?"

"I think it's Young Miss who has been looking at me" Qing Shui smiled and said.

"Don't call me Young Miss, call me by my name" Mu Qing bit her lips and said.

"Why?"

"It makes me feel that you're being very distant towards me and I don't want it to be like that..."

"Mu Qing!" Qing Shui smiled and called her name.

“Mmm!” Mu Qing replied happily.

“Help pour me some wine.”

“You’re shameless!” Mu Qing chided but picked up the wine pot and filled up 70% of Qing Shui’s cup.

“With great wine and a beauty here, I’ll reject even the offer to become a god.” Qing Shui smiled, picking up the wine cup and drank it down in one gulp.

Mu Qing’s face had a satisfied smile as well.

...

When the sky turned dark, Qing Shui and Mu Qing headed out the backyard and went to get Mu Clan’s old man to head to the hall. It was agreed that everyone from Mu Clan would be having a reunion dinner together.

And Qing Shui had long since been treated as a member of Mu Clan.

There weren’t less than 200 people in the hall and all the people here regardless of their age and gender were all from the direct line of descendants, the people who were the closest to them. Mu Clan’s old man, Qing Shui, Mu Fengyang and the others sat at the leading seats.

Of course Mu Qing was around as well. She was even seated next to Qing Shui...

This banquet was very lively and they had a sumptuous meal. What could be made and anything that could be thought of were all available. This was considered a birthday celebration since it was basically as if they were given a new life.

After having been through this, most of the people in the Mu Clan had gone through some slight changes. For one, they felt free, for another, they came to understand a lot of things and knew what they should do. There were even those who could see further and knew that having passed this trial, Mu Clan might be able to gain more status.

Qing Shui was naturally the busiest one here. Mu Clan's old man seemed to be very happy as well. He didn't say much but just looked at the scene before him. Mu Fengyang and the others didn't say much either. It was actually Mu Qian's and Mu Qing's generation which were the liveliest.

However, Mu Qing's generation found it hard to be at ease before Qing Shui. They came to realize that not knowing when, this young man was already like a towering mountain which they could only admire from the side and could never hope to attain. He was an unrivaled fiend.

If it wasn't for the fact that Mu Qing had become a supporting pillar between them, they would never have any interactions with

this young man. However, they had now formed an interaction with him and he was even going to help Mu Clan tide through their greatest crisis.

Right now, no one would have any dissatisfaction with Qing Shui. There would be no eggs intact under an overturned nest. Moreover, right now, everyone could not help but hope that Qing Shui would get together with Mu Qing.

Qing Shui wasn't fazed by these kinds of events. In fact, most of the people here were unrelated to him and he merely responded to them simply. Thankfully, not many people came to get close to Qing Shui.

Another thing was that Mu Clan's danger had not been completely resolved, but they were all extremely confident right now. Their confidence came from this young man, since they themselves were of no help.

Qing Shui didn't eat much. Neither did Mu Qing. Mu Clan's old man, who sat opposite them, kept on looking at Qing Shui right from the very beginning.

After a slight astonishment, the smile on his face continued to remain so peaceful.

This peacefulness gave Qing Shui a disturbing feeling. That was a feeling of having no desires nor wants and it was even one free of any restraints and attachments. Qing Shui let out a sigh. To think that the improvement to his cultivation brought this old man's life

to its end.

It was because the old man was now free of any worries. It might be because he had been too tired.

The banquet didn't last too late into the night and everyone headed back. Mu Clan's old man and Qing Clan sat in the cooling backyard, drinking the Plum Blossom Wine Qing Shui took out. The old man was very happy and drank quite a lot. He didn't ask what this wine was nor did he said that it was delicious. He wasn't even very surprised...

“Old Master, why do you have to do this?” Eventually, Qing Shui still frowned and ask.

“I knew that you would ask. Very well, since you've already realized, it just means that you're already very strong now and I'm also assured now. Qing Shui, can you do me a favor?” The old man's tone was extremely calm.

Qing Shui smiled bitterly, “I know but Sky Prison Sect still has two experts. Are you able to feel at ease?”

He knew that the old man's decision to leave was firm.

“Don't worry, I'll leave after those two old men,” the old man smiled and said.

Qing Shui opened his mouth and wanted to say more but Mu

Clan's old man waved his hand, "Although powerful cultivators have a long lifespan, sometimes having a long lifespan might not necessarily be a good thing. It's just like right now, I feel very lonely. I watched as my parents and brothers left me one by one, feeling excruciating. I even had to see my children and grandchildren leave me. This isn't enjoying life, this is torture. They say the longer one lives, the more inhumane they become. Those who are human don't have long lives and even strong bodies won't be able to withstand emotional pains..."

Qing Shui had a calm and dreamless night.

The next day, he had a leisurely rest. Most of the time in the Realm of the Violet Jade Immortal had been spent on familiarizing himself on the explosive surge of power he had just gotten. He needed to let his powers be fully merged together.

The effects were quite good and one day in the realm was equivalent to 100 days outside. Moreover, Qing Shui had great talent and thus all these were completed very quickly.

When he was free, he would occasionally go into the air and looked into the far distance. Although he knew that the two monsters wouldn't come so quickly, he still kept a lookout for them. This might be a subconscious act since there was a limit to the distance he could see.

"Qing Shui!" Mu Qing shouted out for Qing Shui who was in the air.

Qing Shui smiled and descended and then walked toward the lady in the pavilion who was smiling as beautifully as a flower.

Qing Shui was used to this. He already knew of Mu Clan's old man's plan and he was going to help Mu Clan. This lady before him right now was the most important.

"You look very happy." Qing Shui sat opposite her, picked up a cup and took a sip.

"You don't like to see me happy?" Mu Qing asked.

"I remember that when I first saw you, you were like the unattainable stars in the sky. However, right now, in my eyes, you're the most beautiful," Qing Shui smiled and said to Mu Qing.

"You only know how to act mysterious. You're so strong but you kept on letting me feel worried..."

At the mention of being worried, Mu Qing still felt slightly embarrassed since their relationship was still quite vague. This man hadn't shown any indications and it was still a one-sided love on her side. Thinking about this, she couldn't help but feel bitter.

She had never expected that something like this would happen to her.

"Let me give you something. I don't know whether you'll like it or not." Qing Shui smiled and handed Mu Qing a Violet Jade

Sword and a box.

“For me?” Mu Qing looked at the beautiful Violet Jade Sword and the box which she had no idea what was inside as she said in astonishment. She was shocked that this man would give her things.

“You don’t like them?” Qing Shui hadn’t expected her to be so surprised.

“They are given by you. I like them a lot,” Mu Qing said happily and picked up the Violet Jade Sword which looked very beautiful. She felt that it was an accessory but she didn’t really care what it actually was. She only cared that this was given to her by Qing Shui.

However, the moment she picked it up, she was astonished. This was a powerful weapon, much more so than her own. People who were below Martial Emperor seldom have weapons which could increase their strength three times or more. The limit was usually at double. It was because there weren’t many who would be able to handle a tripling of their strength but of course there were exceptions.

And the Violet Jade Swords which Qing Shui had forged could be said to be the best weapon for those who were Martial Emperor or lower. They gave an additional doubling of strength to the user.

She looked at the Violet Jade Sword in a daze. The violet glow reflected against her beautiful face, giving off a dreamy feeling.

The sword and the beauty reflected each other's beauty.

It was very long after that she looked at Qing Shui, "This sword is too valuable."

Qing Shui shook his head and said after a while, "There's a price to items but ties are priceless. As long as you like it, it will have a value. If you don't it'll just be a piece of junk."

A brilliant pink blush appeared on Mu Qing's face. Qing Shui fell into a daze and then shook his head, smiling. It wasn't because he lacked self-restraint but because the woman's beauty was unrivaled.

When Mu Qing saw Qing Shui's expression she smiled. Putting aside the Violet Jade Sword, she picked up the box and asked, smiling, "What is this? Is it also for me?"

"It's for you. Open it and see if you like it." Qing Shui smiled and said.

"Why are you giving me a gift?" Mu Qing smiled and looked at Qing Shui, appearing very calm.

AST 919 – Violet Jade Earrings, Funeral, What Will Come Will Eventually Come

“Why are you giving me a gift?” Mu Qing smiled and looked at Qing Shui, appearing very calm.

“Do I need to have a reason to do it? Back then, why did you give me the Sky Penetrating Grass, Sunstones and such?” Qing Shui smiled and looked at Mu Qing. He knew what it was that Mu Qing wanted to hear but at this moment, he didn’t wish to say it.

“You’re my greatest affinity in this life. Am I really that unbearable?” Mu Qing held the box, lowered her head and said softly.

“Where’s your confidence as the city’s top beauty? Don’t you know that I’m already slightly interested? If you were to lead me on too much, I might just devour you whole,” Qing Shui sighed and said.

Mu Qing lifted her head and looked at Qing Shui, biting her lips. She gently opened the box with a slight smile on her face. What appeared before her was a beautiful pair of violet colored Violet Jade Earrings. Compared to the Violet Jade Sword, it was more exquisite, as if it had not been the work of a human.

Although Mu Qing knew that the item was very small from the size of the box, she had not expected it to be a pair of earrings for ladies. She smiled happily and said, “What an exquisite pair of earrings.”

After saying that, she seemed to have gone deep into thought. It was because the material of this pair of earrings was exactly the same as that of the Violet Jade Sword. She couldn't help but look at Qing Shui in astonishment, "You were the one who made this."

"Mmm, do you like it?"

"I do!" Mu Qing handed the Violet Jade Earrings and said to Qing Shui.

When passed the Violet Jade Earrings, Qing Shui was stunned and asked, puzzled?, "Why are you handing it to me?"

"You blockhead, I want you to put them on for me," Mu Qing looked at Qing Shui and chided while blushing.

Qing Shui smiled, picked up the Violet Jade Earrings. His hands trembled slightly when he saw her beautiful earlobes and her snow white slender neck.

He had put on earrings for Huoyun Liu-li before but now, he realized that his hands were not very nimble. When he came into contact with that beautiful ear, he felt that soft feeling and Mu Qing's slight tremble, he could only smile bitterly.

The ears were a sensitive spot for many people and could even well be the most sensitive spot for some. This was especially so when they were touched by people one liked. The reaction would

be even stronger.

This pair of Violet Jade Earrings was made by Qing Shui with his Penta-Colored Rainbow Art of Forging. He had made over ten sets of earrings. It would not only strengthen his foundations in his Art of Forging, he could also use them as presents. These things were not for sale even if one had money to afford it.

After putting it on, Mu Qing felt a cooling and pure power rising within her. She looked at Qing Shui in astonishment. To think that this pair of earrings was so powerful that it could increase her abilities to be two times as strong as before (excluding strength gained from external items. It was based on one's strengths from one's physical body and martial techniques alone).

Mu Qing forgot her feelings of embarrassment and looked at Qing Shui for a while. The more she got to know him, the more she felt that he was like a puzzle which couldn't be solved, making her get closer to attempt to solve it.

“How is it?” Mu Qing smiled and met Qing Shui's gaze.

“Beautiful, you're beautiful like a piece of jade.” Qing Shui smiled.

Just as Mu Qing was about to say something, Dong Yan and Sun Yan arrived. They saw Qing Shui and Mu Qing standing very closely together. From the side, it might make one think of some scenes that would make the blood boil.

Seeing that the two of them were saying something between themselves, Mu Qing stood up, “You guys can chat. I’ve something to attend to and will head back first.”

“3rd Brother, when are you going to marry Miss Mu?” Sun Yan smiled and asked.

“Alright, stop with the jokes. We haven’t settled our problems yet,” Qing Shui shook his head and said, smiling.

“That’s true. We don’t know when those two old men will come back. Even if they did, it would be 3rd Brother fighting against them alone,” Dong Yan shook his head helplessly as he said this.

Qing Shui took out the Violet Jade Scythe and that Violet Jade Sword which was slightly wider and passed them to Dong Yan and Sun Yan respectively.

“3rd Brother, this thing looks quite nice,” Dong Yan picked it up casually and said. However, he had just finished his words when his eyes suddenly popped open, as if he was in disbelief. He stood up, waved it a few times and then stood there in a daze, not saying a word.

“Haha, 3rd Brother, thanks,” Dong Yan didn’t stand on courtesy with Qing Shui and said happily.

“We’re brothers. There’s no need to stand on ceremony,” Qing Shui said.

When Sun Yan picked up the Violet Jade Sword, he was no better than Dong Yan. Although he didn't say anything, that joy was still clearly reflected on his face. He said, feeling embarrassed, "I've received so much from 3rd Brother... I owe you too much as well...."

"We're brothers. We don't owe each other anything. I'm the one who is willing to give these to the two of you." Qing Shui shook his head and smiled, saying. From the point when the two of them stood together with him, not fearing death, Qing Shui had treated them as he would treat his real brothers.

...

Another day passed by. Waiting was an agonizing thing to do, especially when one was waiting without knowing what to expect. It was because such a wait was like waiting for death. Luckily, there was still some hope.

After leaving Mu Clan's old man's place the other time, Qing Shui had not appeared at all. Just as he was about to head out, the door was opened. Mu Qing stood at the door, appearing very sorrowful, eyes red.

Qing Shui's heart leaped, "Mu Qing, what's wrong?"

"Old Ancestor has gone!"

Qing Shui was stunned and he felt really helpless. Mu Clan's old man had said before that he would not die before the two old guys did. Why had he passed away? With the old man around, Qing Shui could feel that the burden on his shoulders was lighter. But now that he was gone, it meant that he would have to pick up everything here by himself.

"Come, let's go take a look!" Qing Shui gave it some thought before saying.

The two of them headed to the backyard and realized that many people had already gathered. Each of them had a sorrowful look on their faces. Mu Fengyang and the other members of Mu Clan were tear stricken. Although Mu Clan's old man didn't bother with what was happening outside, with him around, he was there to give support if anything were to happen. However, he had collapsed.

Seeing that Qing Shui had come, Mu Fengyang walked over while the others made way for him.

"Old Master, I offer my condolences. Sir is considered to have lived out his life peacefully. He should have left with a smile," Qing Shui offered a word of condolence and went in with Mu Fengyang.

The room didn't appear luxurious but instead, had a rustic feel. He looked at the peaceful old man lying down on the bed. Qing Shui took his pulse and affirmed that the old man had passed away. A faint smile on the old man's face indicated that he had truly left happily.

“Qing Shui, Old Ancestor has left a letter for you.” Mu Fengyang handed Qing Shui an envelope.

Qing Shui felt very helpless. The words of the dead carried the greatest weight. Qing Shui opened the envelope on the spot. He knew that the old man had definitely left everything in his hands.

‘Qing Shui, when you see this letter, I’ve already left this world. I’m very happy.

Don’t be worried, don’t let them feel sad. I didn’t do what I’ve promised you.

Don’t worry, those two old guys don’t have many days to live either. Since you were able to calmly defeated Tianyu Liangyi who had attained a breakthrough, you won’t have to worry about those two old men. However, you must still be careful.

This old man thanks you. Mu Qing is a good girl. Everyone knows her feelings toward you. You’re the first guy this lass has ever liked since she was young. If you like her as well, please treat her well.

I hope that you will be able to help take care of the Mu Clan in the future as well. I’ll give you my blessings in the netherworld.’

After reading the letter, Qing Shui handed it to Mu Fengyang. He didn’t wish to let other people suspect that he had gotten some treasure from the Mu Clan.

“This was what Old Ancestor has given you. We can’t read it,” Mu Fengyang shook his head and said.

“Take a look. There are no secrets. You guys should read it!” Qing Shui smiled and said.

...

The funeral for Mu Clan’s old man was fixed to be on the next day. In this world, the dead called the shots and it was better to let them rest in peace earlier.

Mu Qing read that letter too. She didn’t say anything, nor get close to Qing Shui intentionally.

Everyone was very worried about the two old men from the Sky Prison Sect. They hoped to be able to let Mu Clan’s old man rest in peace underground before the two of them came.

On this day, everyone in the Mu Clan was very busy setting up the mourning hall. Many people from the city came to pay their respects. Mu Clan was currently in an ambiguous position. Although there were people who didn’t think that the Mu Clan would do well, many of them still sensed that something was different.

Once someone came forward to pay their respects, many others would follow, even the people from the Yin Clan.

It was because if the Mu Clan were to pull through this ordeal, what they have done today would be very important. At least, they wouldn't have any weaknesses that others could capitalize on. And even if the Mu Clan were to be wiped out, they wouldn't lose out either.

On this day, Qing Shui felt slightly uneasy as well. He kept having the feeling that the two old men from the Sky Prison Sect would be coming immediately. Most importantly, Qing Shui's senses tended to always be right.

The day passed by without any dangers. There would still be people coming to offer their respects tomorrow and the burial will only be in the afternoon. Other than the people left behind to keep vigil beside the coffin, the others went back to take a rest. Tomorrow might not be a peaceful day.

Cultivating throughout the night, Qing Shui felt that his forging skills had been stabilized and so had his cultivation. He was not only worried about the two old men from the Sky Prison Sect but he also had some anticipation.

The next day, Qing Shui woke up very early. Or rather, he had not slept after coming out from the Realm of the Violet Jade Immortal. He would occasionally go up into mid-air to take a look at the surroundings.

The sky gradually lit up and there were still many people coming to pay respects. Many of them were in no hurry to leave after

paying their respects. There were many tables and chairs laid out with tea and such prepared for these guests who had traveled long distances to come.

Late morning!

Qing Shui lifted his head to look at the sky. He hoped that his feeling was wrong and they would only come after Mu Clan's old man had been buried. He didn't wish for the old man's funeral to be disrupted.

After about another hour!

Roar!

Suddenly, a huge roar rang out from afar.

This sound caused everyone to be astonished.

They've come. What that will come will eventually come. But why did they have to choose this timing....

"Proceed with the funeral. Leave it to me," Qing Shui said to Mu Fengyang and the others.

"Qing Shui..."

“It’s fine. No one can disturb the old man’s funeral!”

Qing Shui’s voice was cold and piercing. No only the people from the Mu Clan heard it, even the other people who had came to pay their respects could hear his words clearly. The prowess of Qing Shui’s spirit energy caused everyone to feel a chill down their spine.

Qing Shui darted out like an arrow, each step he took looked like an illusion, making everyone amazed.

Nine Palace Steps!

Closing in, Qing Shui could see them clearly. There was a huge Wolf-Headed Jadewater Hawk with two men of extremely old age. They should be about Mu Clan’s old man’s age but more powerful compared to him.

Both old men were dressed in violet, their snow white hair reaching down to their waists. Their murky eyes were filled with a deathly aura as they stared at the young man who had stopped them in their tracks.

“Lad, you’re really amazing to be able to force out two old men who are at the age where we’re near death. If only you were someone from our Sky Prison Sect.” The old man in the lead seemed to be exclaiming and yet feeling that it was a pity.

AST 920 – Killing One, Knotty Problem, As If Killing A God

Hearing the old man's words, Qing Shui had little reaction. He saw that his opponents seemed to be feeling pity. He tried to sense the old man's cultivation level and felt that it should be slightly stronger than Tianyu Liangyi after he had attained a breakthrough.

Looking at them from afar, Qing Shui didn't dare to be careless. The Big Dipper Sword's Seven Star Armored Vest had already lost its effects when he attained a breakthrough to become a Martial Emperor. It basically didn't have any other effects. At each cultivation realm, there would be the most suitable weapons and armors, known to be miraculous for that stage.

Even a Xiantian cultivator would find a Martial Emperor's weapons useless, as he wouldn't be able to withstand the flow of power from the weapon. The weapon which was good for Qing Shui now was the "Violet Star Thunder God" as well as items forged from the 10,000 Years Coldsteel.

Mu Qing was wearing a set of pure white mourning clothes, giving her an additional hint of otherworldly aura. She looked into the distance from the mourning hall with a worried look on her face. In fact, many people from the Mu Clan were also worried.

If anything were to happen to Qing Shui, then everything here would turn to ruin. If Qing Shui were to win, then the Mu Clan would have the majesty of a tiger which ascended the mountains. Just a single difference would end up with two extremely different

results.

Many people from the city had come, each of them coming from some respectable or influential background. Right now, they were also quietly observing what was happening in the air some distance away. Qing Shui and the two old men from Sky Prison Sect were there.

After bringing out the Violet Star Thunder God, Qing Shui felt a lot more calm. A powerful aura started to seep out slowly from his body and it was then that the old men opposite could no longer see this young man as just a youngster. He was truly a strong opponent.

The sun at noon was bright and beautiful. It was already deep into the winter. The two old men were wearing violet colored clothes and the Sky Prison Sabres they were holding were violet colored as well. Under the sun, they exuded a violet colored glow and a sharp and eerie gleam.

“Lad, the two of us are at the age where our lives are going to end soon and we don’t have that many years to live. We don’t even know when was the last time we fought. We hope that you can let us enjoy ourselves in this fight. If you were to die today, all of them will have to die as well!” The sabre held by the old man in the lead let out a murky sound.

Qing Shui looked at that murky and lifeless pair of eyes. If it was not because of the bright color of his clothes and that powerful aura the old man had, Qing Shui would have thought that this guy was dead.

“Everyone in the Sky Prison Sect seems to be of such character. It’s but a matter of time before all of you are wiped out. It would be strange if this wasn’t the case.” The circulation of the blood in Qing Shui’s body grew increasingly faster, to the extent that even his face felt like there was a congestion of blood.

“Lad, if we were to be agitated by a youngster like you even though we’ve lived to this age, then there’s no point in us continuing to live on. We might as well knock ourselves to death. Today, you’ll only be able to lead the Mu Clan to prosperity after killing us with your own capabilities,” the old man with a burly physique said gradually.

The other slightly hunchbacked old man didn’t say a word right from the beginning. Mu Clan’s old man had told him that this old man was deaf and mute.

Qing Shui found it very strange. He hadn’t expected that there would be people of this cultivation level who could still be deaf and mute. He shouldn’t have been born in this state. However, he shouldn’t be taking this stuff into consideration. What that was most important to him right now was for him to wipe out these two old monsters.

“Let’s start. It’s useless to be talking so much.” The old man shook his sabre and rose up from the Wolf-Headed Jadewater Hawk. The other old man rose up as well and stood not far away from the first old man.

Qing Shui held onto his Violet Star Thunder God. He hadn't expected these two old men to be shameless enough to fight two against one right from the start. Although he had expected this to be the end result eventually, he still felt that it was a knotty problem.

It was because he would suffer from great limitations.

However, this was a battle that he would still have to fight. And since the fight was inevitable, there was no need to have any dilly dallying.

Nine Palace Steps!

Qing Shui's silhouette flashed and the amazing Nine Palace Steps was unleashed. This was the primary way he could keep himself safe.

Qing Shui's movement caused the eyes of both old men to light up and they forced themselves to come to a stop. However, they still quickly dashed up and consecutively attacked Qing Shui with the two violet colored Sky Prison Sabres.

Having worked together for many years, their combination could be said to be perfect.

After a few rounds of sparring, Qing Shui felt that it was hard for him to utilize some of his killing techniques. If not for the fact that he had his Nine Palace Steps to rely on, he wouldn't have been able

to stand up to them.

The metal clanks in the air rang out consecutively, creating countless black holes which were like black lumps of air. Everyone else was watching this scene from afar.

Mu Qing's fist clenched tightly. She was more nervous than any other person from the Mu Clan. All of the Mu Clan's lives were connected to Qing Shui. If Qing Shui were to fail, then the entire Mu Clan would be doomed.

After exchanging tens of moves, Qing Shui knew that his opponents had not gone all out. The same went for him. [Use the best steel to make the blade](#). One's killer move should be used at the most appropriate time in order to be called a killer move.

Chinese idiom which suggests that one should use the best resources where they were most appropriate for.

Weaken!

Fiery Golden Eyes, Emperor's Qi and Descending Heavens Talisman!

He also called out the Diamond Gigantic Elephant midway just to use the Vajra Subdues Demons!

After a series of weakening effects, the old men's abilities were brought down to be at about 1,200 stars while Qing Shui's strength was around 1,100 stars. However, Qing Shui could make it up with

the Nine Palace Steps in terms of his speed.

If he were to be dealing with just one of the old men, it would be very simple. However, the result of one plus one was usually not two. It could even possibly exceed three. With the great coordination between these two old men, there was simply no chance for him to unleash any killer moves.

Another thing was that the two old men seemed to be giving it their all, not caring even if both sides were to suffer heavy casualties. This also created a huge problem for Qing Shui. If only one of them was going all out, then he might still be able to find a loophole. However, when two highly coordinated people were going all out against one opponent, that opponent would be in a fix.

Treading on seven stars, Qing Shui's Violet Star Thunder God blocked the deaf and mute old man's Sky Prison Sabre. Retreating while utilizing the impact, Qing Shui then waved his hand to call out the Five-Headed Demonic Spider.

Heavenly Talisman!

Godly Force Talisman, Divine Shield Talisman!

He quickly slapped the two talismans on the Five-Headed Demonic Spider while it covered the two old men who were charging over with its Corrosive Poison Web. The two old monsters from Sky Prison Sect quickly retreated. Even they didn't dare to come into contact with such a web easily.

It would be good if they had hesitations. Qing Shui's mind spun very quickly. He needed to separate the two old men. Otherwise, he wouldn't be able to win. He held the Violet Star Thunder God in one hand while holding a 10,000 Years Frosted Iron Ball with the other.

However, he wasn't able to find an appropriate chance.

Swoosh!

The Five-Headed Demonic Spider suddenly shot out a strand of spider web toward one of the old men while Qing Shui swiftly moved next to the old man, whacking down with his Violet Star Thunder God from the side.

He then shot out the 10,000 Years Frosted Iron Ball.

In order to avoid the 10,000 Years Frosted Iron Ball, the old man quickly retreated. After all, they didn't dare to receive the Frosted Iron Balls which were shot out by a person of Qing Shui's cultivation. With Qing Shui right next to him, he couldn't even block the hidden weapon and could only choose to step back to dodge.

What Qing Shui wanted was to force the old man to retreat. The other old man shot up, wanting to meet up again with him but just then a Corrosive Poison Web blocked his path.

It was then when Qing Shui suddenly gave up on pursuing the first old man and with a flash, appeared behind the old man who had encountered the Corrosive Poison Web. He slammed down his Violet Star Thunder God.

Raging Blow!

The old man was put in a spot where there was a huge Corrosive Poison Web before him and a deadly hammer behind him. He hadn't expected this young man to be able to unleash such a powerful hit. He realized that it wasn't something he could receive.

His only chance was the Corrosive Poison Web before him. He could smell that piercing rotting smell coming from it. The other old man dashed over quickly. The Five-Headed Demonic Spider wasn't able to hold him off.

The old man who was slightly hunchback slashed out toward the Corrosive Poison Web. Just then, fully prepared for this, Qing Shui threw out the Demon Binding Ropes in his sleeves.

The moment he did that, in that short instant, in that short pause, the Corrosive Poison Web bound the old man. This wasn't over. Qing Shui waved his hand once again.

The Blackjade Poisonous Spiderweb landed over the old man on top of his current state.

There was a clacking sound and then a horrified cry.

It was only then that old man with a strong build managed to rush over. He waved his sabre and slashed it out toward the poison web, as if he wanted to slash through it.

The old man in the webs was trapped and the Corrosive Poison Web incessantly corroded his body. When a person was trapped by such a web, if he couldn't destroy it, he would basically be finished. This was unless his body was so powerful that it could resist that terrifying corrosive poison.

However, the cultivation level of these two old men seemed to not have reached that state yet. Therefore, Qing Shui heaved a sigh of relief. With this old man dead, the other one would not pose a problem.

“Lad, you're courting death!” the old man suddenly let out a loud bellow.

He took out a black colored medicinal pill the size of a walnut. It was encompassed by black smoke. The old man ate it and within a few short moments, the faint black smoke seemed to encompass the old man entirely.

Pfft!

Suddenly, the old man spewed out a mouthful of black colored blood onto his sabre.

Hssss....

That violet colored Sky Prison Sabre turned into a pitch black battle sabre at a speed which could be seen by the naked eye. It was in this moment that Qing Shui suddenly felt that the old man had become one with his Sky Prison Sabre.

This was a feeling.

State of one with the sabre?

Qing Shui thought of his State of One with Elephant. It was a pity that the Diamond Gigantic Elephant was still on the weak side and his State of One with Elephant was not strong either. Otherwise, he could possibly use it.

Qing Shui didn't dare to be careless. The old man in the Corrosive Poison Web had disappeared but this burly looking old man was like a Killing God, exuding strong killing intent that would send shivers down one's spine.

“What medicinal pill is this? To think that it has such an effect... It seems like I've underestimated the alchemists in the world of the nine continents.” Qing Shui called back his Five-Headed Demonic Spider and stared at the old man who was like a demon now.

They had given themselves the name of Sky Prison Immortal Duo but secretly, other people called them the Sky Prison Demon Duo.

“Die!”

Like a death god, the old man suddenly shot out toward Qing Shui, slashing down with his sabre. The sabre attack was not a showy one but was one which contained an indescribable power.

Qing Shui’s face turned pale and his feet stomped down non-stop, moving to and from in the Nine Palace directions, waving his Violet Star Thunder God.

Ten Thousand Great Thunderbolt!

Qing Shui felt anxious. It was too eerie. To think that there were such horrifying powers.

Boom!

Qing Shui received this slash with his Violet Star Thunder God and was sent flying, fresh blood spurting out endlessly. The old man paused for a short moment but recovered very quickly and he dashed toward Qing Shui once again with a flash.

AST 921 – Killing With Heart Toxin

Talisman, The Dust Settles, Spirit Gathering Formation

Pale faced Qing Shui had suffered quite heavy injuries and found it hard to fend off this sabre attack. He took out the Crystal Physique Card the old man had given him, slapping down two Crystal Physique Card on himself, one to increase his defense, another to increase his speed.

At the start, Qing Shui didn't want to rely on external items but eventually, he didn't have any choice about using them. After applying them, when he took out a speed reducing Crystal Physique Card and wanted to throw it out, he quickly took out a Heart Toxin Talisman and threw them toward the old man who was now not very far away.

The Heart Toxin Talisman would definitely hit and the other speed reducing item seemed like it would hit as well...

The Crystal Physique Card he had slapped down on himself instantly fused into his body and a layer of "shell casing" seemed to have formed on the surface of his skin. At the same time, his body was filled with energy, especially in his legs.

This was the feeling of having his speed augmented!

The old man gradually slowed down before he stopped not far away from Qing Shui, causing Qing Shui to feel puzzled. Even

though the effect of the speed reducing Crystal Physique Card was very good, it shouldn't be to the extent of causing his opponent to come to a stop.

When Qing Shui saw his eyes, he finally understood that it was because his Heart Toxin Talisman had taken effect. Right now, that murky pair of eyes was filled with pain and regret...

In one look, Qing Shui could guess that this old man had done something which he had regretted before and it was something that was unknown to others. However, it was something which could make him regret for life. To him, it should be like a nightmare.

A scene that the old man could never forget appeared before the old man's eyes. Or rather, it could be said that he could no longer differentiate if it was reality or a dream. It was because it was something he had done and right now, he was looking right at it.

He saw the scene of him killing his wife and children. In that scene, he had totally lost his mind. He now knew that he had been framed by other people and someone had used "Mesmerizing Heart Powder" on him. He only knew of this at a later time. Back then, the other party had wanted to push him to his wits end.

His wife and kids had called out to him repeatedly, asking him to wake up. There were also two young kids who were only three years old and were crying out and calling for their father. However, he still killed them...

The old man trembled. He had gotten stronger since then and although he had wiped out the entire clan of his enemy, it wasn't enough to erase the regret in his heart, especially when he recalled the innocent cries of his three year old son and daughter calling out for him, their father...

They were still kids and they were his kids. To think that he could actually bear to do such a thing to them. For so many years, he had been woken up from his sleep due to the pain of this "mental agony". Up to today, he had not married another woman and did not have more kids of his own.

"Daddy..."

In the scene, two helpless young kids were grabbing onto his leg, calling out to him nonstop.

A trickle of blood flowed down the corner of his lips. No matter if one was evil or good, they were still human and they would still have emotions. This event could be said to be a burden weighing down on the old man's heart. Every time he recalled it, he would have the urge to kill himself. And every time, his heart would be as if it was being cut repeatedly.

Qing Shui saw that blood kept flowing down from the corner of the old man's lips and heaved a sigh of relief. The fact that the old man was injured was secondary. Most importantly, a mental injury would cause more damage than a physical one.

Qing Shui had not expected that the Heart Toxin Talisman could

actually cripple this old man. He knew that it could bring up what was troubling one the most. Which person could live a life without any regrets, one in which they had done no wrong? No one was perfect and the Heart Toxin Talisman could let them recall what they regretted or what that had pained them the most. In that moment the person's mental state would become extremely fragile and might even go crazy from the agony. The Heart Toxin Talisman could also make people who were rash develop an illusion, causing them to feel numb and to do things they would never usually dare to do.

This was how terrifying the Heart Toxin Talisman was. It attacked one's mind!

The Heart Toxin Talisman was meant to be used for dealing with evil people and it would be best if it was an evildoer who had a hint of humanity, so that it could be used to attack the person's mind. However, if the person was cold-blooded, it would be practically useless. However, it would still be possible to numb the opponent through one's desires. It was impossible for one to be completely void of emotions and desires...

It was evident that this old man had yet to attain the stage of "devoid of emotions". He had already lost. Qing Shui was in no hurry to take action. Right now, he would be able to kill him easily.

However, Qing Shui didn't do it. He wanted to let the old man think back to the past or rather to repent. Although it was painful, sometimes it was a means of recollecting the past. Therefore, he didn't take any action.

The old man trembled slightly before he said, “Can you promise me one thing?”

His voice was very hoarse. Qing Shui also felt that the old man’s vitality was running out. He had only half a day of life span left at most.

When a person was on his deathbed, even his words would sound kind. Moreover, it wouldn’t hurt for him to listen. Therefore, Qing Shui nodded.

“I have half a day left to live at most. But you don’t have to worry. I’ll kill myself. I only hope that you don’t harm my ride. I hope to let it bring me to where I want to die.” At this moment, the old man’s face seemed very serene.

Qing Shui hesitated before he nodded.

“Sky Prison Sect has already been disbanded and will not be able to get back on its feet. This is fate” as if he could sense Qing Shui’s emotions, the old man said gradually.

Hearing the old man’s words, Qing Shui could now rest assured. The issue with the Sky Prison Sect was over. He nodded and looked at the old man. Both of them fell silent. Qing Shui was waiting, waiting for the old man to leave.

The old man looked at the sun which was as bright as ever.

However, the old man's heart was heavy. After so many years, he still couldn't get past himself. He had always thought himself to be a heartless person, but he now knew that he had just been deceiving himself all this time.

Their fight had started in the air and eventually it was moved to the ground. The old man looked toward the other old man who had been corroded by the Corrosive Poison Web and was not far from him. The old man then thrust his Sky Prison Sabre into his chest.

He could now be reunited with his wife and children. He could now explain to them what had happened back then. He could repent before them. He missed them a lot...

Qing Shui stood there quietly, looking at the old man who slowly fell down but was wearing a serene smile. Qing Shui let out a long breath. The old man could be said to be free now.

Qing Shui placed the old man onto that Wolf-Headed Jadewater Hawk, not even moving the sabre. He watched as the Wolf-Headed Jadewater Hawk left his vision and it was only then that fresh blood trickled down the corner of his lips.

He wiped it off. His injuries were not very serious but were not light either. However, he could treat them himself. He put away the Blackjade Poisonous Spiderweb and the other violet colored Sky Prison Sabre.

"He's won!" Mu Qing looked at that silhouette which was not

considered very tall. However, at this moment, she felt that he was even taller than the mountain peak which had reached into the clouds.

“He’s won!”

...

Many people from the Mu Clan heaved a sigh of relief. At a point of life and death, many of them felt very scared. Maybe a lot of them might not be afraid of death but they couldn’t withstand the atmosphere before death arrived. Moreover, many of them couldn’t really let go of everything and would definitely have things they couldn’t put down. It was like how people who committed suicide tended to be people who no longer had anything in this world which they would miss and they felt disheartened with this world.

Suddenly, more people came to pay their respects at the wake. As time passed by, more and more powerful sects from the city sent people over. There were even some from reputable sects and clans who were no weaker than the Sky Prison Sect who had sent representatives.

There were also people from Dong Clan and Sun Clan as well.

All the way until the afternoon, when they were preparing to move the coffin, the sounds of someone coming to pay their respects were heard.

The Godly Sword Clan has arrived!

Many people from the Mu Clan were stunned. To think that the most powerful sect in the city, the Godly Sword Clan had come. Mu Fengyang quickly stepped up, dressed in his mourning clothes. At this stage, they still got a shock when they heard that people from the Godly Sword Clan had come.

More than ten people came. The one in the lead was a middle-aged man who stood upright, wearing a set of white clothes with some parts colored gold. A crimson long sabre was embroidered on the clothes, giving the elegant and handsome man an additional sharp disposition.

“Senior, I heard that the Mu Clan’s Old Ancestor passed away. Our Old Ancestor has sent us here to pay our respects” the middle-aged man put his hands together and said to Mu Fengyang.

“Please help extend my thanks. This way please!” Mu Fengyang said calmly.

What person was Mu Fengyang? How could he not understand the reason why they had come? There could only be two possibilities. The first one was because the Mu Clan now had the right to enter the circle of the strongest factions in the city. Thus, the Godly Sword Clan had come forth to build good relations and become friends or allies with them. Another possibility was that they were here to check out their abilities and then, while they were still suffering from casualties, to nip this potential threat in the bud while it was still growing.

However the representatives the Godly Sword Clan had sent were juniors. Therefore, chances were that it was the first possibility. This was a great chance for the Mu Clan.

After the guy had paid his respects, he didn't stay long and turned to leave. Mu Fengyang sent him off himself.

“Senior, after the funeral, Old Ancestor hopes that everyone can meet up,” when Mu Fengyang sent him to the door, the guy said softly to Mu Fengyang.

“Alright, I'll definitely find a day and head over in person.”

“Senior, there's no need to send us off any further. We'll take our leave!”

...

Qing Shui watched from afar as the man left. The Godly Sword Clan did very well and didn't pursue the “insignificant” things. For example, with Mu Clan's old man dead, who was it who had killed the two old men from the Sky Prison Sect? Even if they knew that it was him, they didn't ask. After all, they were here to attend the funeral.

The funeral procession went ahead as planned. A good time was selected for the old man to be buried. It was a tiring day mentally for Qing Shui and he went back for an early rest.

In the Realm of the Violet Jade Immortal, Qing Shui laid down on the bed, feeling relaxed. Everything had come to a close and he had reaped a lot of rewards. It was a pity that he wouldn't be able to return for the new year. The things here should still take some time. He had promised Mu Clan's old man and he would need to help the Mu Clan strengthen their standing here a little bit more before he left.

Cultivation, creating formations, drawing talismans...

Refining poison, tempering treasures, forging...

There were many things which Qing Shui had to do. Every day Qing Shui would set up the Nine Palace Eight Trigrams Formation once but he would fail every single time. He was now used to it. It was as if it would be abnormal if he were to succeed.

Qing Shui didn't know he was stubborn. Right now, the Duality Minutest Formation and Nine Palace Steps had reached quite high levels. It would be very hard to bring them to a higher level. He would need more time.

The Five Elements Minor Formation was a training which required coordination with other people and thus Qing Shui didn't study too much into it after he had taught it to Mu Qing and the others. Right now, other than studying the Nine Palace Eight Trigrams Formation, he spent most of his effort on the Spirit Gathering Formation.

Although Qing Shui had set up the formation before and could do it despite barely succeeding, there were many benefits to the Spirit Gathering Formation. For example, if some precious medicinal herbs were used to set up the formation, it could allow the medicinal herbs to grow better and their quality would be raised greatly as well. It could also be used to improve the demonic beasts' growth. It could even be used to increase the rate of his cultivation if he were to set up the formation next to him when he was cultivating.

AST 922 – Helping Mu Clan, Stopping Temporarily, Heading For Godly Sword Clan

Qing Shui set up the Spirit Gathering Formation in the Realm of the Violet Jade Immortal where his medicinal herbs were at. Seeing his many Spirit Gathering Formations being set up, he could clearly sense that his ability to set up Spirit Gathering Formations was getting increasingly stronger. This made him very happy.

Although he had only set up small Spirit Gathering Formations, it didn't mean that their prowess was very low. They were only small in terms of their size. If his ability to create formations was to improve, the prowess of a small Spirit Gathering Formation wouldn't be something to be underestimated either.

There was still a small Spirit Sealing Minor Formation which Qing Shui had yet to look into. However, he could have a brief understanding what it could do just by hearing its name. It was just that at this moment, he didn't have any concrete information on it. This was why he didn't have any plans to study this small Spirit Sealing Minor Formation yet.

He had been away for quite a long time and the Mysterious Fruit would be ripening again soon. There was also the Ice Snow Sacred Fruit as well. Qing Shui had also collected a lot of items that he had no use for now. As the ratio for the time in the Realm of the Violet Jade Immortal increased, the number of items accumulated also increased.

He had also accumulated quite a number of Vermillion Fruits.

Qing Shui had made wine out of a large amount of those plum blossoms and stored it away. The fish and other creatures in the pond were also growing rapidly. Although there were a lot more spiders now, the pond was very big and the black fish and turtles were reproducing very quickly. Moreover, there were also no cases of natural deaths.

Moreover, this was the Realm of the Violet Jade Immortal and the things that grew here were spiritually stronger than normal ones. While there were plenty of demonic beasts such as spiders, they tended to eat once every half a month and didn't eat much each time. However, they do eat more than people.

The next day, he woke up early as usual. Based on the customs of the World of the Nine Continents, they needed to pay their respects to the dead on the second day. Qing Shui joined them to pay respect and offer incense to Mu Clan's old man.

Because they went very early and the location was not very far away, the servants had only started to prepare breakfast when they returned back to the Mu Clan. Qing Shui went for his morning practice. Mu Fengyang looked at Qing Shui, as if he had something to say but he eventually didn't say anything.

“Are you going to leave?”

Qing Shui had just finished his morning practice when Mu Qing's voice rang out.

“Are you eagerly waiting for me to leave?” Qing Shui smiled and

asked teasingly.

“I’m eager for you to never leave.” Mu Qing said seriously. It was after she had said this that she realized how misleading it was. Feeling embarrassed, she turned her head away.

“It’s going to be the new year soon and I won’t be able to reach home in time. I’m planning to stay here for the new year before I leave,” Qing Shui smiled and said.

“Really?” Mu Qing looked at Qing Shui in surprise.

There was another month to the new year and if he were to be spending the new year here, he would have to stay for at least 40 days. She had initially thought that he would leave within these few days. Therefore, when she heard that he was only going to leave after spending the new year here, Mu Qing realized that she seemed to feel as if she had gained some treasure.

When she saw Qing Shui’s warm smile looking at her, she threw a glance at him shyly.

Qing Shui didn’t choose to stay here in order to stay for the new year, nor was it because he couldn’t bear to part with Mu Qing. He had stayed in order to strengthen the foundations for the Mu Clan and thus he wanted to help Mu Qing train up a team who was strong in formations within the month.

“You won’t be able to relax for the month.” Qing Shui smiled and

said.

Mu Qing was stunned for a moment and quickly knew what Qing Shui had meant. She said happily, “I’ll listen to what you say.”

When a lady like her said something like this, Qing Shui felt a tingling feeling all the way down to his bones. Today, Mu Qing was still wearing a set of snow-white mourning clothes and appeared to be so beautiful, that she was like a snow lotus flower in the snow.

“Find some people who are the most loyal to you, are young and have the most potential. Get senior and the others too. Tell senior to find the people he can trust the most.” Qing Shui said causally. He knew that Mu Qing would be able to understand what he meant.

Mu Qing nodded happily before heading off to have her meal with Qing Shui.

Thankfully, there were some people in the Mu Clan who were now at the elementary stage in the area of coordination in formation and some of them had even mastered the elementary stage.

Mu Qing was the one with the highest level of mastery and she had also been the strongest and the most hardworking of them all. The other people in the Mu Clan had also been working very hard. They were all elites and thus could be said to be very intelligent. To the Mu Clan and the others, this was an opportunity for them.

Every single one of them put in great effort to learn. They practiced, had meals and even lived together. They standardized their living schedules, eating then cultivating. What was required for formations was teamwork and the greater the teamwork, the greater the power unleashed.

The Mu Clan had sent many people away, leaving less than 10% behind. These people had been carefully picked and Qing Shui planned to do his best to train them up, to let himself be at ease too.

They continued to have their meals together. This was what Mu Qing had wanted. After they had their meal, Qing Shui gave Mu Qing a look to indicate that he was going to leave first. Mu Qing stayed behind and joined Mu Fengyang, Mu Qian and the others in a quiet room.

“Grandfather, father...”

After entering the room, Mu Qing looked at them with a complicated expression.

The people here were the direct descendants from the Mu Clan, were from the main branch and belonged to Mu Qian’s generation. There was only a handful of those who were Mu Fengyang’s generation and not many from Mu Qing’s.

“Lass, if you have anything to say, just go ahead. Is Qing Shui going to leave?” Mu Qian looked at Mu Qing and asked. He was also worried now that Old Ancestor was no longer around. If Qing

Shui were to leave, the Mu Clan would be in a great fix.

Although there may not be anyone who would openly mess around with the Mu Clan, there would be some who would do so in the dark. Therefore, they were also worried now that there was no one in the Mu Clan who would be able to be the support for the Mu Clan.

Mu Qian saw Mu Qing's disappointment and thought that Qing Shui was going to leave. He didn't know what to say either. Judging by the situation, his daughter and Qing Shui didn't seem to be going very well. When he thought of this, he also felt very helpless.

When Mu Qing saw Mu Qian's expression, she blushed and said, "Father, what are you thinking? Qing Shui is only going to leave after the new year. He's going to impart some formations to the people from the Mu Clan and came to ask me to find some people who are loyal to the Mu Clan."

Hearing Mu Qing's words, Mu Fengyang, Mu Qian and the other people from the Mu Clan had their eyes light up. At their age, they could see through things very clearly. For example, it was impossible to have Qing Shui stay in the Mu Clan. Even they knew that and thus they had not thought of continuing to rely on Qing Shui.

This time around, going up against Sky Prison Sect made them understand how amazing formations were. Old Ancestor was no longer around and if the Mu Clan was to get back together in the short term, the best way to do so was through formations.

This was a long term plan that they could take and all of them were looking at Mu Qing happily. This junior of the Mu Clan now played the most important role.

They knew that this was a crucial point for them and they mustn't miss out on this opportunity. Otherwise, it was likely that the Mu Clan would be devoured by other people. It seemed that they would need to go all out this time around.

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Qing Shui came to a training ground in the Mu Clan. This was the place with the widest space and there was also an arena in the middle. Even now, there were also people training here. However, there weren't many of them.

After they all saw Qing Shui, they greeted him respectfully.

Not long after, a group of people walked over. There were about 100 of them. Dong Yan, Sun Yan and the others were around as well. Qing Shui had specially called them over. Right now, the Mu Clan and the Dong Clan had joined forces. This was good as well.

There were twenty people of Mu Fengyang's age, most of whom Qing Shui had met before. It was because most of these people were the ones who had entered the Sky Penetrating Mountains previously. When they saw Qing Shui, they were very happy as well.

Currently there were over 30 people from various age groups. Although they were not exceptional, the rest of the people were much weaker. There was also a bunch of 40 to 50 youngsters but most of them were in their thirties.

These people all knew some basics to formations and were split into three groups. Mu Qing led one group, Mu Qian led one group and Mu Fengyang led the last group.

However, Qing Shui paid more attention to teaching Mu Qing, Dong Yan and Sun Yan. Of course, he wouldn't say this to the others. He paid more attention to binding formations. On the other hand, the others would be focused on starting with the Five Elements Minor Formation and the Duality Minutest Formation.

Today, Qing Shui planned on imparting to them the Five Elements Minor Essence. However, the people at the eye of formation learned a different Five Elements Minor Essence from other people. This was the privilege of the people to be stationed at the eye of the formation. This would allow their prowess to be much stronger than usual.

This type of Five Elements Minor Essence could be merged with the original Qi of Xiantian and was like a martial technique, bringing only benefits. Qi of Xiantian imparted this to some of them, just to reaffirm the importance of the eye of the formation.

This could allow the rest to surround the eye of the formation. Only with the eye of the formation around would they be

considered a powerful entity. Without the eye of the formation or if they were separated, their individual powers were nothing.

Therefore, they were now very clear and felt that it was good to be doing this. This was something they were willing to see.

Qing Shui already knew that Mu Qing had a Supreme Treasure. Looking at that “Holy Bracelet!” which was exuding a warming aura, he understood why she could improve so fast. What made Qing Shui the happiest was that she had a great talent in mastering the foot techniques.

The Duality Steps had already reached a high level of mastery.

Practice for formations was boring but they were all filled with a strong will and patience. It was because if they wished to survive and make a break for themselves, this was the best opportunity for them. They mustn't let it go and must try their best.

Qing Shui led Mu Qing throughout the Duality Minutest Formation, darting about. He would force her to be in the formation for two hours everyday and then let her set up the formation. Her speed and prowess were also changing endlessly.

In the blink of an eye, ten days passed by!

In the past seven days, the transformations that had occurred were tremendous. The Five Elements Minor Essence they were cultivating had started to bring about quite a good effect. It was

because during this period, Qing Shui had also made use of medicinal pills, including performing some slight impurities cleansing.

Since he had started doing it, he decided to put in his best effort for it. He didn't care for this little stuff and thus the progress the Mu Clan's members made was in leaps and bounds. However, on this day, Mu Fengyang planned on visiting the Godly Sword Clan.

Qing Shui planned on joining him since they couldn't afford to have anything happening to Mu Fengyang. Otherwise, what they had done earlier would have all gone to waste. For a very long period, the Mu Clan still needed Mu Fengyang to be around to call the shots.

Mu Fengyang didn't reject Qing Shui's intention of joining him. The reason the Godly Sword Clan had shown respect to Mu Fengyang was all because of Qing Shui. In fact, the Godly Sword Clan wasn't interested in the Mu Clan but was only interested in Qing Shui. However, they knew that the Mu Clan played a critical role here.

The others stayed in the Mu Clan and carried on with their training. The place was still filled with Duality Minutest Formations. One of the reason was for training, while another was for Mu Clan's safety.

The Godly Sword Clan was situated along the borders of the city and they dominated the western area and was back facing the Sky Penetrating Mountains. A great river passed through the bottom of the mountain, with densely packed buildings stretching out from

the bottom of the mountain to the peak. On the other side of the cliff, there was a huge carving of a saber. It was a tremendous stone saber.

AST 923 – Godly Sword Clan’s Ancestor, Forming An Alliance

Qing Shui stared at the giant sword statue carved from stone. It was emitting a strong killing intent. Qing Shui looked over at Mu Fengyang and noticed that they had both been astonished by the sight of the stone sword.

There were many extraordinary people with varying strengths, the sculptor of this stone sword must have been someone powerful. Only the most astounding of masters could have carved their killing intent into the stone sword. The craftsmanship and strength of the sculpting could not be overlooked.

Sculpting was like Drawing. Masters of the Drawing Realm could cause people to sweat profusely from looking at one drawn word alone. This was the charm of art, not only did the master require exceptional practice but their technique must be brought to the point of perfection.

Looking up ahead at the mountain path nearby, the slope gradient was small but the path zigzags and spirals to the top. At the foot of the mountain, a group of people were standing guard but there were also people moving in and out.

These people were in uniforms, with a sword embroidered at the chest. Sometimes the color of the knife was different but it was always one sword. Even though the shade of the sword was slightly different, without much guessing one could tell these were members of the Godly Sword Clan.

Qing Shui browsed around nonchalantly. Thinking back to the funeral, the middle-aged representative from the Godly Sword Sect had a scarlet long sword embroidered on his chest. Most of the people moving about had red, green or blue longswords embroidered but their strength was weaker compared to the middle-aged representative.

“Those that have arrived please stop where you are at!”

When Qing Shui and Mu Fengyang went to the mouth of the mountain path, a youth walked up from the crowd, extending his long sword to block Qing Shui and Mu Fengyang’s path.

“Young fellow can you please pass on a message that the Mu Clan is here to visit.” Mu Fengyang said with a smile.

“You are from the Mu Clan? I will lead you inside. The upper executives have already notified us that if you arrive you can go directly inside,” the young fellow’s demeanor changed immediately and he said respectfully. His eyes inadvertently looked over at Qing Shui several times.

Everyone knew that the Mu Clan was dependent on a strong young man, but there was no way to be sure if the person standing next to him was the real deal that had razed the Sky Prison Sect.

“Do you guys think that young man was the one? He did not have any resemblance to the descendants of the Mu Clan.” The young man waited till Qing Shui was gone before he spilled his thoughts.

“The younger generation of the Mu Clan only has Mu Qing and some other mediocre people, from what I have seen he is definitely not one of them,” one of the older, more mature youngsters said.

“Brother Yan, then it looks like that young man is a super master,” immediately someone said in surprise.

“Sounds about right, if not him, what use would it be for the Mu Clan to bring a younger generation member for this occasion?”

“That is certainly the case, if not for that young man, the Mu Clan would probably just be as weak as before.”

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Following the mountain path upwards, the Godly Sword Sect’s youngster was leading the way up ahead, Qing Shui and Mu Fengyang were following from behind. While walking, both of them were surveying the surrounding architecture.

There were rows upon rows of stairs here, although the gradient of the stairs was small. From the distance, looking diagonally upwards to the peak of the mountain, it was difficult to feel the gradient of the slope. While traveling on the mountain path, inadvertently, a small step would show up.

They continued towards the peak of the mountain. On top of the mountain, it was very spacious but there were fewer buildings.

There were more than a dozen manor groups, the youngster that was leading Qing Shui and Mu Fengyang lead them towards the manor residing in the highest area. Even though the manor was the tallest, it was not the biggest.

The manor here could not be called luxurious, though it carried a heavy, imposing atmosphere. That is because the buildings were constructed from giant boulders. Although some of the colors looked very bright, the manor standing in front of Qing Shui seemed unchanged from its original look. It was still the color of the original giant boulders, except the surface was polished until it was very smooth.

Two people were standing guard by the manor's entrance. Qing Shui could see that both guards had a golden sword embroidered on their chest. However, their strength was not comparable to the handsome man that participated in Mu Clan's funeral.

"Lai San, who are they?" The bold man on the left side asked the youngster.

"Brother Hui, they are from the Mu Clan, by the Elder's orders, I am to bring them to him."

"So they are from the Mu Clan, please, the Elder is waiting in the back."

Although he was smiling, that smile was very stiff, causing Qing Shui to also want to smile. This man was not one to smile much but his effort to force out a smile made people feel uncomfortable.

After the previous youngster said his farewells to Qing Shui, Mu Fengyang and the bold man, he returned downwards. The bold man lead Qing Shui and Mu Fengyang to the inside of the manor.

Similar to the look from the outside, there were not many alterations to the insides, only a bit polished up. The appearance of the manor was particularly old fashioned but it had a different style to it.

Without reaching the backyard, Qing Shui could already smell the fragrance of herbs. Qing Shui could instantly identify that it was the smell of blossoming herbs, it should be an herb of decent quality too.

Once they reached the backyard, all they could see was an area covered by a sea of flowers, about a hundred meters out stood an elderly man in plain clothing.

“You guys enter, I will not enter,” the bold man brother Hui said with a grin ushering Qing Shui and Mu Fengyang to enter.

The two of them entered together. When the Elder turned around, Qing Shui could clearly see the Elder’s appearance. The Elder’s face had a wide forehead with eyes of wisdom. His chin was perfectly round, with slightly meager cheeks. In combination with the long and slender body type, the elder gave off an otherworldly feeling.

Seeing Qing Shui and Mu Fengyang, the Elder walked over with a

smile.

“Honourable guests have arrived, please excuse the lack of welcome.”

“Elder you are too kind, Fengyang thanks Godly Sword Sect’s for paying a visit.”

The Elder took a glance at Mu Fengyang and Qing Shui, sighing while laughing.

“Don’t mention it. Don’t call this old man realistic but everything on this Earth happens with cause and reason, don’t you think?” Elder said while lightly shaking his head.

Mu Fengyang smiled as well, except there was a hint of bitterness to his expression. He fully understood what the Elder was trying to get at, the funeral earlier did not happen without any cause.

However, Qing Shui was not a descendant of the Mu Clan, had Qing Shui been a member of the Mu Clan, he would not hesitate to pass the leadership to Qing Shui’s hands.

“You should be Qing Shui, a member of the younger generation that will surpass us in time, a true prodigy,” the Elder said after observing Qing Shui for a good while.

“This inferior one has seen the Elder,” Qing Shui said while bowing.

“Good, come, let’s go inside and sit!” Elder pointed straight ahead.

That place was a stone house but it was many times taller than a normal stone house. It looked rather large but it was not the size of a pavilion building. The three of them walked towards the direction of the stone house, Qing Shui still could not fully grasp the strength of the Elder. In addition, the Elder did not appear senile from old age.

Qing Shui did not weigh the strength of people based on their appearance but instead by their aura of vitality. If their vitality was weak, even if they were young, they would be like an old person. However, if their vitality was strong, even if they were old, even if they looked senile, they would live for a long time.

Although the area of the stone house was large, it only contained one floor. After entering, it gave off an air of comfort. The centerpiece of the room was a statue, not overly tall but slightly taller than a regular person. The statue was colorful, even the weapon in its hand was colorful. The weapon was a general type long sword.

Qing Shui surveyed the surroundings and concluded that this was the Elder’s cultivation location. He did not understand why the two of them were brought here.

Glancing to the bedroom on the side, Qing Shui figured that was where the Elder lived. Bringing them here was a type sincerity.

There were no tables or chairs, only some light futons. Qing Shui saw the Elder's plain attire and thought it was strange. However, seeing that the Elder was a follower of Buddhism, the lifelike statue holding a weapon with such killing intent seemed out of place. If a normal person walked in, they would be frightened.

The three of them sat on the futons inside the stone house, between them was a stone table that was one foot tall. The middle of the table had a small stove, with water boiling on top, that was making bubbling noises. With a Yixing clay teapot and yixing clay tea cups on the table... ..

Drinking tea and talking about their daily lives, Mu Fengyang was also a senior, in terms of being slick and sly he would not be less experienced than the Elder. Besides, he was not talking right now, the control of the discussion was in his grasp. Although he was not sure what sort of control they had, he knew that the Godly Sword Sect had an important matter to speak with the Mu Clan.

"I know that we are all perceptive, so I will cut to the chase." The Elder placed his tea cup down and smiled.

"Elder, what would you like to talk about? If it is something that the Mu Clan can do, we will not brush it off," Mu Fengyang said seriously.

Mu Fengyang's words were as blunt as they could be. If it was within the Mu Clan's powers, they would complete it without hesitation. But If it was something beyond the Mu Clan's strength, then it was up to the Mu Clan to decide if they would attempt it.

“Fengyang, don’t misunderstand. I just want to form an alliance between the Godly Sword Sect and the Mu Clan. The purpose is to increase our strength since I feel that in the coming years, there will be unforeseen change in the Eastern Victory Divine Continent,” the Elder thought for a bit and said slowly.

Mu Fengyang was silently thinking.

“Elder, excuse my bluntness, there are many clans and sects within Jun City and this Continent’s Capital that would want to ally themselves with the Godly Sword Sect. I am well aware of our own strength and the Mu Clan’s strength is at the very bottom of that list, because Qing Shui is bound to leave at some point.” Mu Fengyang did not want to take advantage of the situation. The Elder had spoken what was clearly on his mind, so Mu Fengyang also had nothing to hide. In addition, the Elder should have expected that Qing Shui was going to leave.

Given that the result could have been properly predicted, allying themselves with the Mu Clan seemed unrealistic.

“This I know, Qing Shui is one of the most talented youngsters I have seen through my years. It is unlikely that he would be content with being secluded in a corner of the continent. In the future, his brightness will shine across all Nine Continents,” the Elder said while laughing.

Qing Shui never thought that the Elder would compliment him with such high praise but he remained silent. Once the Elder had

proposed the alliance, Qing Shui had already predicted it would succeed.

“The alliance between the Mu Clan and I, given the Mu Clan’s potential, my terms will not change. Especially since I heard about the battle that occurred between the Mu Clan and the Sky Prison Sect before. Although Mu Clan may not be strong now, given time, the Mu Clan’s strength will not be weak. If Fengyang is to accept, we will find a good day to hold the ceremony to celebrate our successful alliance,” the Elder said while looking at Mu Fengyang.

“Exactly what we need,” Mu Fengyang said happily. He did not thank the Elder, since an alliance was mutually beneficial, this did not warrant gratitude, else the alliance would be unbalanced.

“Elder and the Mu Clan are the best of my friends, if the Godly Sword Sect has any use of me in the future, please do not hesitate, Qing Shui will not decline to help,” Qing Shui said with a smile.

AST 924 – Secrets Of The World Of The Nine Continents, Mu Qing's Successful Nine Palace Eight Trigrams Formation

He was trying to explain his relationship with the Mu Clan and at the same time was expressing sincerity. Qing Shui was very sincere, even the Elder did not feel anything wrong.

The Elder said Qing Shui would have large achievements in the future. Qing Shui had never questioned his own strength, but what he required was time. However, the words the Elder said had weight and could even be taken as a promise of sorts.

Qing Shui did not think that the Godly Sword Sect was going to propose an alliance to the Mu Clan. Although he had had a hunch about it before, he had felt that it was impossible. The Godly Sword Sect was Jun City's strongest. On the surface, the Mu Clan was incomparable to their level of strength.

However, the Godly Sword Sect had a purpose for this proposal. The Elder's sight was set on the long term, he would not deviate from his long term plans for short term gains. Especially when this young man was a crucial existence in this plan, in the long run, the possibilities were endless.

Hearing what Qing Shui said before made the Elder happy, he really wanted to hear those words. He believed that Qing Shui would be able to fulfill that promise, especially in the future.

Thinking back to the Elder's yard filled with a sea of flowers, Qing Shui felt he had to leave something behind. Immediately, he thought of the Spirit Gathering Formation and took several Beast Parchment directly from the Realm of Violet Jade Immortal and gave it to the Elder. "This being our first meeting, this is a gift I have brought for you, I hope the Elder will like it."

These were things that Qing Shui had drawn. He had given them to Mu Qing, Dong Yan, Sun Yan before to assist them in cultivating.

In addition to noticing that the Elder liked flowers and herbs, giving the gift to the Elder now was more an act of reassurance. Mu Fengyang could tell, this gesture from Qing Shui was for the Mu Clan. Currently, Mu Fengyang could not put his feelings into words. Grateful? No, it had gone way beyond just being grateful. If there was ever the chance, he would not hesitate to tread through fire for Qing Shui.

The Elder declined for a bit, but received it with joy. From one glance, the Elder could determine that the Spirit Gathering Formation carried massive benefits. The Elder was especially happy about its functionality.

"Qing Shui, perhaps in the future when your strength and abilities become more refined, you will be able to enter the other four continents. Rumor has it that there are several Sects and Clans with people well versed in formations," the Elder said while happily storing the Beast Parchment away.

"The other four continents?" Qing Shui knew all the names of

each continent in the World of the Nine Continents. However, he was unsure what the Elder meant by the other four continents.

The Elder was also surprised for a moment. What had seemed to be casual talk, especially given Qing Shui's current strength, should have been known to him. However, given Qing Shui's puzzled expression, that did not seem to be the case.

“The World of Nine Continents is divided into two levels. Greencloud Continent, Central Continent, Eastern Victory Divine Continent, Northern Sacred Lu Continent, Southern Viewing Continent are part of the first level. Western Oxhe Continent, Vast Sea Continent, Soaring Dragon Continent and Dancing Phoenix Continent are part of the second level.” The Elder explained after seeing Qing Shui's expression.

“Why is it that being here or even being in Central Continent, that there's no news about the situation on the other four continents?” Qing Shui became curious; the more he thought about it, the more doubt surfaced in his mind.

“That's because the two levels have been isolated from each other and they rarely interact with each other, thus there is almost no news about the situation on the other four continents. Although rumor has it that the four continents are their own corners that seems a bit wrong. However, anyone wanting to reach the four continents must enter through the Northern Sacred Lu Continent. But a restriction applies, people can only go through using a special method.”

After listening to the Elder, Qing Shui was stunned for a bit.

Thinking back, his doubts from earlier had cleared up in his mind.

“Elder, are you always aware of the situation in the four continents?” Finally encountering someone with knowledge of the landscape of the World of Nine Continents, Qing Shui could not miss this opportunity to gain some insights.

“I know very little but I will tell you what I know. The other four continents and the five continents here are isolated but there are still powerful individuals that travel over, very little travel the other way. From what I am told, the strength that resides with the four continents is very powerful. The rumor is that the four continents are rich with Spiritual Qi which benefits cultivation greatly. Thus when the strongest of the five continents reach the minimum strength required to enter the four continents, they will travel there to cultivate. Given the natural abundance of Spiritual Qi, the quality of materials is also high. Hence, technique and battle equipment are also of high level and quality.

The following conversation described that the other four continents were powerful, but was not saying that everyone from the four continents were powerful masters or Martial Emperors. It was a similar situation to the five continents where the majority of the population were normal people. However, the major difference was that people who cultivated would level faster compared to normal. It was like how Eastern Victory Divine Continent and Southern Viewing Continent had more ample amounts of Spiritual Qi than Greencloud Continent. Cultivating would be faster and have greater results but the advantage was very little.

Having ample Spiritual Qi could produce better quality Gifted

Earth Treasures and Divine Weapons. Those things appeared naturally in the world, finding one required luck. But when someone had their hands on one of the treasures, their, along with their family's, position would often rise very quickly. This usually resulted in a family gaining power and influence.

Qing Shui suddenly thought of the girl in the Crystal Coffin, perhaps she was not originally from here...

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The more notorious a person's name, the more likely the name can provide protection. The incident where Qing Shui annihilated the Sky Prison Sect was already a hot topic of Jun City. Further, when the Mu Clan and the Godly Sword Sect became an official alliance people were already in an uproar. Now that the Mu Clan and Godly Sword Sect's presence was as firm as a castle, those who had animosity towards the Mu Clan were stopped dead in their tracks.

Returning to the Mu Clan's manor, Qing Shui had spent most of his mornings on members of the Mu Clan, especially Dong Yan and Sun Yan. The family members of the Dong Clan and Sun Clan had already left but since Dong Yan and Sun Yan were here, he informed them of everything.

The news had already spread like it had wings. Not to mention that the news of the existence of an evildoer like Qing Shui and the fact that Qing Shui had used formations, had exposed Qing Shui as a Formation Master with more than what meets the eyes.

Formation Masters were a powerful existence, just like the original Sky Prison Sect, riding roughshod over people. No one could oppose them because of their formations but the Sky Prison Sect was annihilated by Qing Shui.

This means that Qing Shui, as a Formation Master, was much stronger than the Sky Prison Sect. Without a doubt, it also made Qing Shui's character even more of a mystery. That's because such a powerful youngster was not just young, but also mysterious. He originated from Greencloud Continent, which was the weakest continent of them all. Which family could have had such a genius? Given all the above, it made Qing Shui more of a mystery.

In addition, people were also aware that members of the Mu Clan were practicing formations under Qing Shui's guidance. This made many Sects and Families envious. Formations were something legendary from the other four continents and were only mastered by the greatest Formation masters.

Talking with the Elder at the Godly Sword Sect made Qing Shui curious about the other four continents. What surprised Qing Shui the most was the passage to the other four continents was not in the Central Continent but was in the Northern Sacred Lu Continent.

Even he had never been to the Northern Sacred Lu Continent. Although he had really wanted to go because that place was where the Lion King's Ridge resided.

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In the blink of an eye, ten days had already passed by. In another ten days, it would be New Years. In these last twenty days, members of the Mu Clan had used the majority of their time, other than time spent to eat and sleep, to cultivate. In addition to Medicinal Pills, the Mu Clan had also taken their savings out.

As for the preparations for New Years, there were people taking care of it. But for those who had put their time into cultivating, they seemed to have forgotten about New Years. Their achievements from the past twenty days were big, that is in terms of practicing formations.

The one who made the greatest progress was, of course, Mu Qing. She had abruptly reached a higher grade and was barely qualified to learn Four Phases Steps. Her combat abilities had doubled. Not only was her strength doubled but her lethality was already increased.

In addition, Mu Qing had also learned how to craft formation flags. Other things like Five Elements Minor Formation, Spirit Gathering Formation and Spirit Sealing Minor formation were also drawn for her.

Qing Shui also taught Mu Qing the Nine Palace Eight Trigrams Formation. Qing Shui was not scared that she would be able to learn it, rather he was afraid that she could not. Qing Shui was not successful in placing the formation but taught her the method anyway. Whether or not she would be successful was entirely up to her.

“Qing Shui, why does the formation have no reaction?” Mu Qing said to Qing Shui while scrunching her eyebrows.

Qing Shui took a look and saw that she was placing the Nine Palace Eight Trigrams Formation. He had never mentioned to her that he had never been successful with it, but continued to let her practice and learn how to place it. She was a determined individual. In one day she had already spent a long time researching and placing the Formations over and over again.

“Maybe the technique is missing something crucial!” Qing Shui said.

“No reaction, perhaps the Eye of the formation does not have enough Spirit Power. What if I placed a Spirit Gathering Formation in the middle?” Mu Qing spoke her thoughts out loud while looking at Qing Shui.

Those words that Mu Qing uttered caused Qing Shui to freeze. Mu Qing saw Qing Shui’s expression and thought that he must be agreeing tacitly. She thought she had guessed correctly, so she went ahead to place the Spirit Gathering Formation as the Eye of the larger formation.

The Spirit Gathering Formation was unlike normal formations because it lacked killing power. On top of that, it was also a very simple formation and could be added onto other formations at will. The only exception was that the Spirit Gathering Formation could not be in the center of the Spirit Sealing Formation since they would counteract each other.

Mu Qing quickly set up a small Spirit Gathering Formation as the Eye of the larger formation. When the Spirit Gathering Formation activated, one could sense the Spirit Qi of Heaven and Earth gathering over. Although it was not much, it was a never ending supply of Qi that could continue supplying energy until the Formation Flags were exhausted.

The better the quality of the materials used for the formation, the more powerful and long-lasting the formation became. Pebbles could be used for some formations but the effect would be lessened. In addition, the formation would not last for a very long time. Some formations' energy exhaustion was too high, while others did not have much drain. For example, Death Formations were amongst the highest energy draining formations and Trap Formations had very little drain. Thus, using pebbles for some formations would be a definite cause of failure.

Some large formations use mountains as formation points. Although mountains are just larger rock formations, they are gathering places of massive amounts of Spirit Qi. Some powerful Formation Masters would consider using the environmental elements, such as mountains and rivers to form their formations. The power that resulted from these formations was ridiculously strong.

Suddenly, a stream of Spirit Qi burst out of the formation, directly causing it to activate. Since Qing Shui and Mu Qing were both within the Eye of the formation, they were exposed to the formation. Mu Qing looked over at Qing Shui with joy.

Mu Qing was pleasantly surprised, but Qing Shui was more

surprised than she was. At this instant, he felt muddleheaded. The shock from seeing what was in front of him left him in disbelief. Although Mu Qing's Nine Palace Eight Trigrams Formation was of the lowest grade, it was successful. More importantly, Qing Shui could set up the formation now and the power of it would definitely be stronger than Mu Qing's formation.

“Why didn't you tell me that the Eye of the formation had to be a Spirit Gathering Formation. Do you know how many times you caused me to set up this formation today? Well, I guess it was not too bad. Now I am well practiced in setting this formation up.”

Qing Shui was left stunned, without looking towards the overjoyed Mu Qing and said “It is not that I didn't want to tell you, but because I have never successfully placed the formation before.”

Qing Shui's words stopped Mu Qing in her tracks. She could only look at Qing Shui shocked, her mouth slightly opened. Qing Shui looked towards the pearly white teeth and tender tongue, trying to control his feelings and thoughts.

AST 925 – Powerful Binding Formation, Eating The Forbidden Fruit

Qing Shui was still very happy. After all, he could now use the Nine Palace Eight Trigrams Formation. He didn't understand why he hadn't thought of setting up a Spirit Gathering Formation here at this stage. Back then, he had tried endless times and had even used the ingredients from powerful demonic beasts to make formation flags. However, he still hadn't succeeded.

In fact, Qing Shui knew that the most important reason was that in his consciousness, there was no mention of putting up a Spirit Gathering Formation in the eye of the formation. He had trusted the things that had appeared in his consciousness too much. This event let Qing Shui understand that there might be some things which might not be perfect.

“Come, let's go take a look at this formation.” Since Qing Shui was in the formation, he naturally could tell what the Nine Palace Eight Trigrams Formation was like.

“Mmm!” Mu Qing replied happily. She knew that she had succeeded in setting up the formation and then saw Qing Shui's elated expression and unknowingly felt happy as well. She even realized that her joy was not because she had succeeded in forming the Nine Palace Eight Trigrams Formation, but because she could help Qing Shui.

A world could be found in a single flower!

Qing Shui could now sense how amazing this Nine Palace Eight Trigrams Formation was. Taking this one step suddenly brought him into a new world and when he took one step back, he discovered that it was not the place it previously was.

This was a world of ice and snow, where the piercing cold was like sharp blades. Not far away, there was a group of ice bears which was about the size of the Long-armed Vicious Monkey King. Their tremendous howls sounded like they were going to tear the skies apart.

Qing Shui didn't dare to go up against them head on. There were too many of them. Moreover, he still had to look for Mu Qing. He performed the Nine Palace Steps. The Nine Palace Eight Trigrams Formation basically was adding the Nine Palace positioning onto the Eight Trigrams Formation and only the Nine Palace Steps would allow one to be able to move swiftly like a fish in the water in this formation. It allowed one to freely move about just by taking one step, thus Qing Shui was now feeling very excited. Lifting up one foot, he directly jumped out of that area.

The place earlier should be one of the eight gates in the Eight Trigrams Formation. However, after taking this step, Qing Shui was stunned. There was a lady standing not far from there, with an amiable smile and looking at him.

“Mother!” Qing Shui shouted out in surprise and dashed over. However, he was suddenly stunned.

Gate of Illusion!

A drip of cold perspiration appeared on Qing Shui's head. He knew that this was not his mother but he still walked over slowly. He knew that this was an illusion in the Gate of Illusion. However, this was something created from Spiritual Qi and there was also a strong killing intent. If he wasn't careful, he could be killed easily.

Thank goodness that the illusionary character had not spoken. It might be because the level of the formation was not high enough. Qing Shui took a casual step forward and then came to a stop. After a few breaths' time, the person dashed out, attacking towards Qing Shui...

Qing Shui calculated the time. If he had forgotten everything earlier and dashed over, even if he hadn't died, he would have suffered some serious injuries. After all, he wouldn't have his guard up against his own mother.

Qing Shui dodged and just looked on. In the end, he let out a sigh and left. He missed his family too much...

Qing Shui still knew some general knowledge with regard to the Nine Palace Eight Trigrams Formation. After a slight hesitation, Qing Shui performed the Nine Palace Steps. When he came to a stop, he realized that Mu Qing was still nowhere to be seen.

Another Nine Palace Steps...

The things he encountered in the process made him increasingly excited. The powers of this binding formation, when added with

the Nine Palace positionings, were simply too heaven-defying. If it was just an ordinary cultivator, even a powerful one, would feel at a loss and could even perish in the formation.

Of course, this would be dependent on the formation's prowess. Otherwise, absolute power would definitely be able to destroy the formation.

Each time around, Qing Shui would remember the positioning and it was only on his seventh attempt that he saw Mu Qing and the 13th attempt before he arrived next to her. When he saw Mu Qing, he grabbed her hand.

The formation was heartless and if Mu Qing had came across that group of ice bears earlier, it would probably be tough for her to handle them. Formations don't recognize people and would not refrain from attacking a person just because the person was the one who set up the formation.

When she saw Qing Shui disappearing earlier, she had felt worried. However, she didn't move. When she saw Qing Shui appearing again he grabbed her hand worriedly, she smiled. This was the first time he had grabbed her unknowingly, all because he was worried about her.

Qing Shui saw the faint smile on Mu Qing's beautiful face and quickly let go of her hand. However, he grabbed her hand once again, saying helplessly, "Try using your Four Phases Steps. See how it works in this formation."

Mu Qing nodded and grabbed onto Qing Shui's hand tightly. She then performed the Four Phases Steps and darted about in the formation. With Qing Shui next to her, she was fearless. However, she would still pay attention to her surroundings.

The Four Phases Steps was too different from the Nine Palace Steps. However, it could still be used for moving about in the Nine Palace Eight Trigrams Formation. In fact, as long as one was proficient in the area of formations and Nine Palace positionings, even an ordinary person would be able to enter and exit the formation freely.

The formation was filled with dangers, but there were still many spots which would always be safe. As long as one was proficient in formations, the person would be able to enter and exit those safe areas freely. However, they couldn't kill enemies since once the enemies got near and also landed in the safe zones, then the user would be in hot soup.

Therefore, it was better for the person who set up the formation to be powerful. Only this would allow the user to unleash the full potential of the formations.

Although this was also the first time Qing Shui had entered the Nine Palace Eight Trigrams Formation, he was extremely familiar with the place. Or rather, it could be said that he could skillfully sense, as well as enter and exit whenever there was a change.

This was the result of powerful spirit energy and the Nine Palace Steps!

However, right now Mu Qing was the one taking the lead, while Qing Shui was acting as the guard while familiarizing himself with the formation. The more Mu Qing explored the place, the more excited she felt. She held Qing Shui's hand and continued to dart about through the spaces and didn't even feel scared when they were chased by those powerful demonic beasts. It was because she knew that this guy next to her would be able to protect her at any time.

However, when she recalled how he would be leaving in about half a month, her grip on Qing Shui's hand tightened.

Roar!

Just as Qing Shui and Mu Qing used the Four Phases Steps to escape from a group of Double-Winged Lightning Tiger, suddenly a group of Blazing Flame Wolves suddenly appeared before them. There were at least 1,000 of them and the series of deafening wolf howls caused one to feel the shivers.

Mu Qing stopped and looked at Qing Shui. Her thoughts were very clear, there was no escape.

Qing Shui carried her up horizontally, unleashed a few Nine Palace Steps and arrived at a safe spot.

Mu Qing's beautiful arms circled around Qing Shui's neck and she quietly rested her head against his chest. Qing Shui was just about to put her down.

“Don’t move!” Mu Qing’s lazy voice rang out, causing Qing Shui’s bones to feel weak.

From the first time he had met her, Qing Shui could tell that she wasn’t a lady who would be cute and reliant. She was like a dignified and proud phoenix, with an aloofness that sank deep into her bones. The feeling she gave out wouldn’t let one feel put off but rather, make a guy feel inferior. However, when a lady like her suddenly become like a tame sheep, that extremely visual impact caused Qing Shui to space out.

Being able to smell that faint fragrance and feel that soft body in his arms, he would be lying if he said that his thoughts had not run wild. In terms of relationships, he still couldn’t make himself to take the initiative. He felt very conflicted.

“If you were to tempt me even more, don’t blame me for not holding back. I’m trying very hard to hold back right now.” Qing Shui lowered Mu Qing slightly and she suddenly felt that something was hitting against her butt.

She trembled and got down, looking at Qing Shui. Her heart was beating very fast. Although she didn’t have any interactions with guys, she knew what went on in a relationship. She felt very anxious and a little scared.

Qing Shui was a little regretful. His actions earlier had been a little flirty. After all, the two of them were just friends. He thought of how his hand had touched her before, had hugged her and

now...

It wasn't that Qing Shui didn't like her. There were probably not many guys who wouldn't like a beauty like her. Moreover, they had been through trials before. Most importantly, she liked him, but only held some restraint because of her pride. However, she was rational and intelligent and didn't want to miss out the chance and thus she had been trying to express herself to him all this while. This was despite knowing that he had wives.

“Mu Qing!”

Mu Qing looked at Qing Shui, her blush still on her face. Although she had let loose of a little of her restraint, if anything were to happen, she wasn't ready for it yet.

Qing Shui held her hand and walked slowly in the formation. Hand in hand, their hearts were palpitating.

“You're very independent and I already have quite a few women,” Qing Shui smiled bitterly and said.

“You're afraid that I won't be able to get along with them?” Mu Qing smiled and asked, still blushing. Her words had clearly expressed her feelings.

Qing Shui was stunned as well before he looked at Mu Qing, “You've really decided?”

“You want me?” Mu Qing’s eyes lit up as she looked at Qing Shui.

Qing Shui hugged her tightly and said to her in a soft voice, “I want you. I don’t know if I love you but I know that I like you a lot. I like your smile, I like looking at you and I don’t wish to see you sad. The reason I’m doing all this for the Mu Clan is all because of you. If someone were to lay their hands on you, I won’t allow it, no matter who they are. Is my desire to monopolize too strong? I’m only afraid that you’ll feel aggrieved if you were to be with me.”

Mu Qing’s body was slightly stiff at the start but she gradually relaxed. She put her hands around Qing Shui’s neck and looked at him happily. At this moment, she felt very satisfied.

“I don’t feel aggrieved! I love you! But I’m not ready yet...” Mu Qing flushed and said softly.

Qing Shui also turned red because he had had a reaction. Of course, Mu Qing sensed it as well.

“Don’t worry, before you’re ready, I won’t eat you up. I’ll wait for you to ask me to eat you up.” Qing Shui grinned and said.

“Stop saying rubbish!” Mu Qing didn’t lift her head and pounded Qing Shui, chiding.

“Qing Shui!”

The two of them hugged for a while before Mu Qing spoke up

softly.

“Mmmm!”

“Can... can you kiss me...?” Mu Qing buried her head in Qing Shui’s neck and said in an extremely soft voice.

Qing Shui was taken back. He couldn’t tell if this proud lady wanted to know what a kiss felt like or was trying to provide his reaction with some relief...

Qing Shui was also feeling slightly agitated and excited. After all, it had been very long since he had touched a woman. He lifted up Mu Qing’s chin. Right now, her beautiful eyes were very soft and she was extremely charming.

Qing Shui felt a surge of evilness gushing up within him and he landed an intense kiss on those sexy and trembling lips...

...

Qing Shui had taken out his bed from the Realm of the Violet Jade Immortal. Right now, under the blankets, Mu Qing was in Qing Shui’s arms. The two of them had ended up taking the forbidden fruit.

Earlier, Qing Shui had even given his promise, but he hadn’t expected this lady’s expressions to make him lose all of his senses. Moreover, they had already affirmed their relationship and were

both mature adults. Furthermore, this could also increase both of their abilities. The union of Yin and Yang was the greatest bliss in this world. She was slightly older than him, but yet was still a virgin...

AST 926 – Raising, Finishing Touch, New Year Is Here

The union earlier was untiring and filled with wild demands. Mu Qing was currently lying in Qing Shui's arms. The flush on her face hadn't faded yet. Such a breathtaking sight was visually stunning.

“Are you satisfied?” Qing Shui's hand lingered on that fair skin that was as smooth as jade.

Mu Qing didn't say anything and only covered both Qing Shui's eyes bashfully.....

Qing Shui laughed in amusement at her adorable action. He affectionately pulled her into a tight embrace, enjoying the warmth after all this rain and wind.

“Qing'er! What's your strength now?” Qing Shui asked with a smile.

When they were engaged in the embarrassing act earlier, she discovered that her dantian felt as if it had suddenly exploded. Her strength had improved by leaps and bounds, but then she was very quickly drowned by that wonderful sensation.....

She had only recalled it now that Qing Shui was asking her. She had never expected that her strength could be raised this way. But now that Qing Shui had asked her, Mu Qing looked at him in disbelief after she tried sensing it.

She slowly got up from lying on top of Qing Shui. Since she was completely naked, those perky and delicate breasts sprung in Qing Shui's face like a pair of rabbits. Her sensitive nipples even brushed the tip of Qing Shui's nose.

Qing Shui was dazed before burying his face in those soft and fair mounds, greedily breathing in their fragrance.

.....

“More than 60 stars!” Mu Qing looked at the man who was riding on top of her. This man was like a tireless wild beast. He didn't really take a breather from the beginning until now.

Qing Shui was enjoying the pleasure that was highly addictive. He knew that Mu Qing was talking about the increase of her physical strength and cultivation arts. More than 60 stars. She was another step closer to the so-called Martial Emperor realm.

This was beyond Qing Shui's expectations. Mu Qing's strength was initially very powerful already. She was even stronger than him before he had broken through to Martial Emperor. However, that didn't mean that her destructive power was higher than his. But why was her strength raised more than twofold this time.....?

Could this have something to do with him breaking through to Martial Emperor?

Qing Shui was a little puzzled, but then he was no longer surprised. When Mu Qing's strength was raised tremendously, he could feel it. Other than that, his strength had also had a tremendous breakthrough.

Now that his physical strength had also been increased by nearly ten stars, that meant his physical strength had achieved 70 stars in total. Nevertheless, this made Qing Shui feel excited. Although the increase wasn't as much as Mu Qing, it was still quite a lot.

He just didn't understand why Mu Qing would receive that much of an increase. It must've had something to do with him breaking through to Martial Emperor. Most importantly, Mu Qing's constitution was quite a rare gem and she could absorb energy. Her speed and ability of absorbing Spiritual Qi were overwhelmingly strong. Both her constitution and beauty were not in the least inferior to the ladies in the Portraits of Beauty. This was also the first time where Qing Shui's strength increase was less than his partner during a Duo Cultivation.

But Qing Shui didn't only get an increase in physical strength, his spirit energy also had a tremendous change. Compared to spirit energy, that increase of ten stars in strength was next to nothing.

For Qing Shui, the change in spirit energy this time was a good finishing touch to this phase and a perfect one at that. It kind of felt like bringing a painted dragon to life by drawing in the pupils of its eyes. This made him feel happier than getting his strength increased by 50 stars. The Primordial Flame Ball had been very powerful before, but somehow something was lacking and he couldn't put a finger on it. It was only now that Qing Shui felt it

could display its mightiest prowess. It was just like how standing higher would allow one to see further, while standing at a lower place would hinder one from seeing further. This was a type of realm. Besides his 'vision' had also been increased immensely, so the benefit he had received this time was no doubt great.

The brightness of the Yin-Yang Image in his sea of consciousness had increased by one fold compared to before. Its size had only been increased a little but its thickness seemed to have increased by quite a lot, becoming increasingly corporeal

From now on, his spirit energy could be considered a big trump card. He couldn't tell how many times his spirit energy had been raised compared to when he was in the Crystal Palace. He was wondering if it could match that woman's spirit energy.

But at least he would definitely not be confined by her again.

Everything happened in just a brief moment. When he snapped back to reality, he carried on doing the most pleasurable thing in the world.

.....

After exiting the Nine Palace Eight Trigrams Formation, Mu Qing's countenance appeared to be slightly unnatural. She excused herself to the bedroom and fled with a red face after throwing a look at Qing Shui.

Qing Shui secretly reminded himself to give her happiness, as he watched her disappearing beautiful silhouette.

He then started to arrange the Nine Palace Eight Trigrams Formation and was able to succeed very easily. He went in there to familiarize himself before coming out again. He stood there deep in thought. The realm of the formation seemed to have a relation to the spirit energy of the person who set it up. If a formation was under the spiritual sense of the person who set it up, then there was a trick to covering it up. Otherwise, the space beyond every gate of the formation was spacious. Attempting to cover it with spirit energy was easier said than done.

The days passed by!

Qing Shui had been very happy for the past few days. During the day, he spent his time with Mu Qing in the Nine Palace Eight Trigrams Formation to raise her strength. At night, he spent his time in her bedroom, holding the woman that all the men in the capital city were infatuated with in his arms and making her writhe in pleasure.....

Mu Qing knew Qing Shui couldn't stay here for too long, so she had been sleeping with him every night. She wanted to engrave and deepen the mark that Qing Shui bestowed to her, so that it would last in her heart.....

New Year had arrived without them realizing it!

New Year was tomorrow and it was celebrated throughout the

World of the Nine Continents. New Year should be observed no matter where you were. This was a joyous day to be celebrated. Although it might be celebrated differently in some places, New Year celebrations were virtually the same. Firecrackers and fireworks were a staple.

The more flourishing a place was, the louder the firecrackers would seem to be and the more brilliant the fireworks would be. Qing Shui was a little speechless when he saw the firecrackers and fireworks that the Mu Clan were preparing. They were actually the size of an adult. These were definitely not allowed at all in his previous world.

Although New Year was coming, some people of the Mu Clan never stopped their cultivation. But Qing Shui did as he pleased. However, he wasn't interested in going out, because he still had to instruct the people of the Mu Clan.

Mu Qing looked at Qing Shui apologetically. They continued doing this until evening, before everyone stopped and went back home to freshen up. It was only now that the whole year had truly passed.

“Qing Shui, I haven't walked around the city's big streets for a very long time. Let's go together!” Mu Qing smiled when she found Qing Shui.

“Sure!” Qing Shui agreed. He wasn't going to stay much longer and he couldn't bring Mu Qing along with him when he left. So Qing Shui would agree to anything that Mu Qing asked for.

A happy smile appeared on the faces of the other people from the Mu Clan, as they watched Qing Shui and Mu Qing's retreating figures. The experienced people in particular could sense something going on between them, but they only had a little suspicion. It would be a wonderful thing if their suspicions were true.

Ever since he arrived in this city, this was officially his first time going out in the streets. Qing Shui basically wasn't worried now even if he left. With the current strength of the Mu Clan, if someone tried to swallow them now, they wouldn't be able to get away without getting a few of their teeth busted.

There were invincible powerful cultivators in the Mu Clan. It was also only a matter of time before Mu Qing set foot into the realm of Martial Emperor. It probably wouldn't take too long for someone with her gift. By the time Mu Qing became a Martial Emperor, her strength would already be terrifying if she was only relying on her Formation Techniques and Four Phases Steps in their current realm.

It wasn't like Qing Shui didn't want her to achieve the Nine Palace Steps realm, but he felt like it would be a difficult feat to achieve. The Four Phases Steps seemed to have already hindered her. This realm probably required a very long time to research and polish. The fact that Qing Shui's Nine Palace Steps was able to attain the large success stage had a close connection with his Ancient Strengthening Technique.

The Four Phases Steps must not be underestimated. Its prowess

and profoundness were able to strengthen one's battle capabilities by a lot. With Mu Qing's current strength, she would be able to handle an early Martial Emperor cultivator with a strength of over 100 stars.

The big street was extremely lively now that it was nearly New Year. Some stores weren't really closed up completely because most of the owners lived inside the stores. Although things didn't sell off too fast during New Year, that was instead actually advantageous to some stores like inns and snack stalls.....

Some stores that sold accessories and jewelry would also thrive better than usual during this period of time. Qing Shui only bought some little trinkets at some vendors stalls. These people lived on the bottom rung. Qing Shui had chosen to shop here rather than those luxury stores, because he didn't fancy any of the stuff sold in those huge stores.

The stuff there was expensive and the merchants were very cunning. Most importantly, Qing Shui didn't want to contribute any money to them, because the stuff sold there was inferior to the ones that Qing Shui forged himself. Besides, those cheap trinkets sold at the vendors stalls intrigued him more instead.

They also reminded him of the old madam from the Mo Clan. He was acquainted with her because of her small vendor stall. The precious Nine Continents Boots was a gift from the old madam, as well as the Nine Palace Pendant that was worn by Di Chen.

So, Qing Shui would rather shop at the street stalls with goods laid out on the ground. He was even willing to pay extra for the

good stuff rather than to shop at those luxurious stores. Qing Shui and Mu Qing were currently buying some small trinkets from one of the vendors stalls. Mu Qing looked extremely happy while holding some of the stuff that Qing Shui had bought for her.

As long it was something from Qing Shui, she'd be happy to receive anything.

“How can you buy this kind of stuff from these trashy stalls for the capital city's number one beauty?”

A disdainful voice was heard after Qing Shui passed the money to the old woman who sold him the stuff.

If the person didn't mention 'the capital city's number one beauty', Qing Shui wouldn't have guessed that the person was talking about him. But now, he knew. He was sure that the previous statement was directed at himself.

Mu Qing frowned and was about to say something before Qing Shui pulled her hand and slowly turned around. He saw a frosty youth that was in his thirties but definitely didn't exceed forty years old. He was very good-looking and exuded a sharp yet effeminate aura. His lips were a little thin, causing him to appear somewhat unkind.

There were four people behind him, two youths and two elder men. When Qing Shui laid his eyes upon this youth, he was also shocked. This youth's strength was actually not in the least inferior to Mu Qing's current strength.

This capital city actually had another figure like this? Qing Shui was very surprised. It seemed like the strength of this big city truly shouldn't be underestimated.

“Qing Shui, they are from Poison Mountain Stockade,” Mu Qing reminded him from one side.

Poison Mountain Stockade was a powerful sect in this region. As its name suggested, this was a sect that used poison. One would know that this sect must be very powerful just by looking at this young man.

When Qing Shui saw the youth, he understood why he could be this calm and collected. He was currently in the limelight of this region in the city and didn't expect that someone would still come to pick a fight with him. It seemed like there were many who wanted to use him as a stepping stone.

However, Qing Shui was hesitating now because the two elderly men behind him were also of Martial Emperor grade. It was very normal for this Poison Mountain Stockade to have a few Martial Emperors. After all, they were a famous big sect in this region. But they were all early Martial Emperors. This had also allowed Qing Shui to identify the current common strength. They were usually around Grade One and Grade Two Martial Emperor. Cultivators that were able to reach Grade Two Martial Emperor were all top-notch powerful cultivators.

AST 927 – Enmity With The Poison Mountain Stockade, New Year, Marriage Proposal

He had gathered quite a bit of information on the Poison Mountain Stockade over this period of time. This sect was quite similar to the Sky Prison Sect in nature. After all, people who used poison weren't going to leave a very good impression on others. Not other powers would take the initiative to provoke poison-users. Even the powers of such scale like the Sky Prison Sect wouldn't provoke the Poison Mountain Stockade in the past. It was evident that the Poison Mountain Stockade was a dreadful sect.

That was because they use poison. If they didn't, then their strength would be reduced by a lot. He was guessing that they were almost the same as the current Mu Clan, with two peak Grade One Martial Emperor cultivators at most.

If they still had to rely on poison if they met him, then they could only blame themselves for having rotten luck. Qing Shui smiled at him. "She's my woman. What does bringing her to any place to buy things have anything to do with you?"

Mu Qing blushed at Qing Shui's words, yet she had a peculiar feeling in her heart. She felt very warm and happy.

As the master of the Poison Mountain Stockade, Gu Song had had his eyes set on the young miss from Mu Clan for a very long time. When he heard that the 'Flower Crusher' from the Sky Prison Sect had his eyes set on Mu Qing, he went to the Sky Penetrating

Mountains once. This woman was already the woman that he had ‘secretly chosen’ long ago.

In the capital city, no one dared to snatch the woman that he, Gu Song, had set his eyes on. But then he heard that a young man had come to the Mu Clan and got very friendly with Mu Qing. Not only that, he was also very shocked to learn that he had helped Mu Clan to destroy the Sky Prison Sect.

Even so, he didn’t believe it. He had a feeling that this was only a rumor because the Old Ancestor of the Mu Clan had passed away. They needed someone courageous to stand up, otherwise the Mu Clan would be in danger.

So he believed that this young man was capable, but definitely not as powerful as rumor had it. Besides, the Mu Clan had an alliance with the Godly Sword Clan. This made him even more suspicious. Perhaps the Mu Clan still had a powerful old man with them.

Gu Song had always been the strongest cultivator among the younger generation. Even without using poison, he could still rank in the top three. If he was using poison, even an early Martial Emperor cultivator wasn’t his opponent.

He was conceited, but he believed that he had the right to be!

When Qing Shui claimed that Mu Qing was his woman, Gu Song’s face turned ashen because he saw how Mu Qing’s expression actually turned bashful and happy. With his countless

experiences in reading women, it seemed like the most beautiful woman of the capital city had been snatched by the swiftest.

Gu Song trembled in rage. Although the Poison Mountain Stockade was dreaded by many, it wasn't like he could kill anyone he wanted. Even though poison was a terrifying thing, one would have better poison immunity as their strength increased. Powerful cultivators also carried decent antidotes on them or even accessories that could render poison ineffective.

Qing Shui looked at Mu Qing. She blinked those beautiful autumn-like eyes of hers instead. Back then Qing Shui would have never believed that a capable woman that was as independent and refined as her was capable of displaying such an adorable expression. Just like how he would never believe it if someone had told him now that the lady in the crystal coffin was capable of making such an expression either.

So Qing Shui was very shocked right now. Both of them looked at Gu Song. Gu Song's eyes looked as though there were flames burning within them. A fierce look flashed across his eyes.

Qing Shui had a very powerful spiritual sense. On top of that, his spirit energy was no longer the same as before, so he was able to immediately sense a wave of brutal aura spreading towards him.

Poison!

Qing Shui glanced at the Violet Jade Earrings that hung on Mu Qing's ears and then sensed the poison that was rushing towards

them. He knew that everything would be fine, so he stared at Gu Song. “Poison isn’t omnipotent. Do not bother me and Qing’er. Otherwise, don’t blame me for being brutal.”

They hadn’t reached the point of having a conflict with each other yet, so Qing Shui didn’t want more trouble. Besides, even in his absence the Mu Clan would still be able to handle the Poison Mountain Stockade because they still had the Godly Sword Clan on their side.

Gu Song didn’t expect that the poison he unleashed would be like a stone dropped into the sea. Not only was it ineffective, but it was also discovered by his target. It seemed like his opponent was knowledgeable about poison too or had treasures that could prevent poison. He hesitated. After all, he wasn’t an impetuous person. At first, he didn’t really believe that Qing Shui had the strength to destroy the Sky Prison Sect. But after seeing how his poison was ineffective against him and also something that the two elderly men had told him, he stopped dead in his tracks.

“We are not his opponent. Don’t bring trouble to the Poison Mountain Stockade. Otherwise, we may lose our lives here today.”

“Let’s go. We are going to meet again.” Gu Song gave Qing Shui a look of resentment before he left with his people.

Qing Shui was initially thinking of making them stay. But then his opponent was quite powerful and he wasn’t fully prepared for now. Besides, the poison from earlier was directed at him alone.

“Seems like they don’t have the intention to lay a finger on the Mu Clan yet.” This was also the reason why Qing Shui didn’t escalate things.

The Mu Clan still needed time right now. Given enough time, they would be invincible in the capital city. Even the current Mu Clan wouldn’t easily be devoured by anyone else. Perhaps in these few days time, he would leave something for the Mu Clan again.

“Seems like there’s quite a number of people from the capital city pursuing Qing’er!” Qing Shui teased her. After the people around them had left, Qing Shui and Mu Qing were no longer in the mood to shop, so they turned back.

“This Gu Song is part of the Poison Mountain Stockade. His words are sharp and unkind and he is vicious and merciless. Qing Shui, you must be careful. I fear that he won’t let you go when you try to leave,” Mu Qing said with slight worry in her tone.

“Don’t worry. Believe in your husband’s abilities.” Qing Shui looked at Mu Qing and smiled.

“I don’t have a husband, you big meanie.” Mu Qing’s face turned red and hastily took a couple of steps forward. There was a hint of a smile on her flushed face and it was intoxicating.

By the time they returned to the Mu Residence, the sky had completely turned dark. Before they could make their way into the house, a trail of brilliant fireworks rose up into the sky in the distance!

That was like a signal. Countless fireworks immediately flew into the skies from the surroundings before they exploded and turned into countless specks of lights.

Qing Shui lifted his head up to watch the fireworks filling up the skies. They were still as stunning as always. He turned his head to the side to look at Mu Qing, who was standing beside him. She also lifted her head and was watching the skies. The brilliant fireworks illuminated her face, causing her to appear dreamily gorgeous right at this moment.

The fireworks in the skies were merely an ornament when they were compared to the beauty by his side. Sensing Qing Shui's gaze, Mu Qing turned her head around and caught Qing Shui staring at herself with slight infatuation. A wave of happiness rose up in her heart. So it seemed like he wasn't as unperturbed as he appeared to be after all...

"Are they pretty?" Mu Qing smiled and held Qing Shui's hand in hers.

"Yes they are, but you are prettier!" Qing Shui gave her a simple and honest smile.

"So a blockhead like you knows how to say something nice too," Mu Qing laughed tenderly before pulling Qing Shui towards Mu Residence.

When the Mu Clan's juniors saw that Mu Qing and Qing Shui had

returned, they came over and surrounded them.

“Sister Mu Qing, you’re back.”

“Brother Qing Shui!”

.....

Mu Qing tried to pull her hand away when she saw the other people from the Mu Clan coming over, but Qing Shui held onto it. He had no intention of hiding their relationship. Since he had already taken advantage of this young miss, he had decided to do something here.

Before he left, he was going to ask the Mu Clan for Mu Qing’s hand in marriage and hold a wedding reception to let everyone in the capital city know that she was Qing Shui’s woman. This way, many would know how to behave in the future after witnessing his strength.

As soon as they saw Qing Shui and Mu Qing holding each other’s hands tightly, they smiled coquettishly at them.

“Good one, Brother Qing Shui. We were just talking about how there’s no one but Brother Qing Shui in this capital city who is worthy of our Sister Mu Qing,” a youth chuckled. He was Mu Qing’s younger male patrilineal cousin.

Qing Shui could only laugh along. This youth was indeed good at

flattery, to be able to flatter both of them at the same time.

“Brother Qing Shui, when are you going to let us call you brother-in-law?” Mu Xue also giggled at Qing Shui and Mu Qing.

“You damn lass, stop your nonsense,” Mu Qing quickly reprimanded her. Although she had an intimate relationship with Qing Shui, she didn’t want to tie him down.

“I have already decided to bring up a marriage proposal to the seniors today. If everything goes well, we are going to hold a wedding reception the day after tomorrow,” Qing Shui said in a serious tone.

“Alright, I’m going to tell Third Uncle.” Mu Qing’s male cousin from earlier ran away with a smile.

“Great. I was sure that Qing Shui would definitely be part of our family.....”

.....

Qing Shui looked at Mu Qing who was standing beside him looking blank. “I had already decided on this that day in the formation,” he said softly.

Qing Shui’s words made Mu Qing give him a glare before she turned away bashfully. Those lips that curled up looking sexy and alluring. They were even more stunning under the skies that were

filled with fireworks.

The Mu Clan had only started to light up their fireworks and firecrackers after Qing Shui and Mu Qing had returned. Everyone in the Mu Clan basically came out. The joyous occasion was celebrated along with brilliant fireworks and hearty laughter.

This continued for two hours before it was time for New Year's Eve dinner!

Everyone of different ages gathered in the great hall. The great hall was extremely lively. The dishes served on the table were also extremely sumptuous. They were exquisitely prepared and delicious, most likely the works of a famous chef. This wasn't too surprising, considering the abilities of Mu Clan. Besides, the Mu Clan owned inns and they also had a head chef stationed at their residence all year round.

Qing Shui had become the focal point, maybe because he had mentioned that he wanted to do a marriage proposal. Now, Qing Shui realized that the people around him were mostly staring at him. He must admit that he was impressed by how good the boasting skills of the youth from earlier was.

He could tell that everyone was waiting for him to make some declaration by the expressions on their faces. He stood up slowly. Mu Qian happened to be just right across him and naturally, Mu Qing was beside him.

“Senior, I would like to take Miss Mu Qing as my wife.” Qing

Shui wasn't too accustomed to things like this, so he could only summon up his courage and say it. He had no idea how other people would do a marriage proposal, but he knew that they would normally ask for blessings from the seniors first.

Mu Qing was so shy that she lowered her head. Mu Qian was also amused by his own daughter's expression. She had grown so much and he had never seen his eldest daughter looking this way ever since she had grown up. Although he was happy for her, as a father, the thoughts of his daughter marrying someone still made him felt a little reluctant even though he was happy.

It was said that a daughter was the lover of her father in their previous life. Father and daughter always had a special bond between them. A father's love was as great as the mountains. The husband that a daughter picked would unintentionally have some traits of her father in him. That was a formless influence. A daughter grew up with her father, so she would be influenced in some way by his speech and actions.

"I will leave Qing'er in your hands. I am not worried and I am happy. I don't have any other requests, I only hope that you will treat her well," Mu Qian chuckled.

"Daddy!" Mu Qing called out shyly.

"Uncle, I will not let anything happen to Qing'er as long as I am alive," Qing Shui promised earnestly.

"I was worried that Qing'er wouldn't get married. This is great."

Mu Qian chuckled. He was very pleased that his daughter was able to find this kind of man. He was very satisfied.

“Daddy, is your daughter that bad?” Mu Qing pouted and huffed. Her beautiful face was flushed crimson.

“My daughter is the most beautiful. Come, let us toast to Qing’er for finding a good man.”

.....

“Uncle, these are gifts for you all. Consider them presents from me for the marriage proposal. There’s one for everyone in the Mu Clan. It can prevent poison and calm the mind. Wearing it will also give other additional effects.” Qing Shui took out a slightly larger brocade box and passed it to Mu Qian.

AST 928 – The Martial Madman Of Poison Mountain Stockade, Violet Jade Bracelet

Mu Fengyang and some of the elderly men smiled wordlessly at the side. Nobody would intervene in Mu Qing's wedding, as she had taken all the initiative. Naturally though, the proposal from earlier today would still have to formally go through Mu Qian.

“These are?” The items were beyond the expectations of Mu Qian, Mu Fengyang and the others. These were definitely good things, because they came from Qing Shui.

“I have forged these jade pendants. Give them out to everyone!” Qing Shui smiled, as he opened up the slightly bigger brocade box. A strong wave of Qi that accompanied a violet light emerged.

Many saw the jade pendants in the box together with the earrings, but there were very few of them. Even though there were many women in Mu Clan, there were more men. The box was emptied out in no time by everyone present.

Mu Fengyang had already found out that there were some conflicts between Qing Shui and Mu Qing with the young chief of Poison Mountain Stockade, but he didn't make a big deal of it. Now that Qing Shui had taken out all these items which could prevent the effect of poisons, it seemed that he planned in advance.

Everyone was very happy when they received the exquisite jade pendants and earrings, but they were all taken aback when they wore them. Their strengths had actually increased drastically.....

Mu Qing looked at Qing Shui blissfully from one side. At this moment, that content smile of hers was indescribably moving. Mu Fengyang, Mu Qian and the others each had also received a pendant, but Mu Xue alone received a Violet Jade Sword.

This made the little lass so happy that she couldn't stop calling him brother-in-law. Cheers and laughter rang out endlessly. Qing Shui and Mu Qing's wedding was a big deal for the Mu Clan. It was an event to be celebrated.

"Uncle, I hope to hold the wedding reception the day after tomorrow. I have to leave in a week." Qing Shui said gently, while looking at Mu Qian.

Mu Qian was not surprised by Qing Shui's words. Instead, he looked at Mu Qing, who was still standing there, smiling. He nodded his head towards Qing Shui, "I will inform the others tomorrow and send out the invitation cards."

Mu Qian naturally knew Qing Shui had to leave and this time, his departure had to be done in a grand way. He still felt grateful towards Qing Shui. Even if he didn't have to leave this time, he would still give his daughter a grand wedding.

"When will you leave, Qing'er....." Without holding himself back, Mu Qian spoke softly.

"Daddy, I still can't leave for the time being. Let's wait until the Mu Clan has settled down before we discuss this again!" Mu Qing

said cheerfully.

Qing Shui smiled without saying much. Bringing Mu Qing along wasn't a problem for him but just like she said, the Mu Clan needed her right now. If he demanded her to depart with him, it would just make things difficult for her.

Mu Qian and the others didn't argue any further on this topic either. Qing Shui and Mu Qing's wedding was pretty much finalized. On the very night of New Year's Eve, some of the people made the invitation cards.

After the New Year's Eve dinner, everyone was considerate enough to not disturb the two of them. Qing Shui was standing with Mu Qing on the spacious and empty arena in the rear courtyard of the Mu Residence. The arena was a little high and the fireworks around them were still continuously rising up into the skies. They would go on endlessly for the entire night.

“Don't worry about the Poison Mountain Stockade. Just set up the Nine Palace Eight Trigrams Formation around the Mu Residence and wear the jade pendant. Diligently cultivate the formation technique. The Poison Mountain Stockade shouldn't be too formidable. Make full use of the Spirit Gathering Formation and those medicinal pills so that you can reach the Martial Emperor realm soon.” Qing Shui chuckled while he looked at Mu Qing.

“Alright. Qing Shui, I will miss you.” Mu Qing nodded her head lightly.

“I will miss you too.” Qing Shui pulled Mu Qing into an embrace.

The two of them embraced, as they whispered to each other. They stayed like this until midnight before they returned.

The next day, Qing Shui came out from the building and proceeded to carry out his morning practice as usual. Today was the first day of the New Year. It was the day to visit relatives and friends. The Mu Clan was also very busy now too, informing others of the wedding in advance as well. In less than half a day's time, the news of the Mu Clan's eldest daughter and Qing Shui's wedding spread as if it had grown a pair of wings.

At the same time, the Mu Clan's invitation cards had also been sent out. There were some people who didn't believe the rumors initially but now that the Mu Clan's wedding invitation card had been sent out, nobody doubted them anymore.

.....

The Poison Mountain Stockade!

Gu Song had also heard the news regarding Mu Qing's wedding. He had always felt that the Mu Clan's young miss was his. The Mu Clan's young miss was arrogant and there was hardly any news of her having an intimate relationship with anyone. He had wanted to wait until he broke through to the Martial Emperor realm before he proposed a marriage to the Mu Clan.

Currently, he was only one step away from the Martial Emperor realm, but Mu Qing was about to marry someone else. This made his normally peaceful heart restless. In addition, the incident that took place on the street yesterday made him feel even worse.

The invitation cards the Mu Clan had sent about the wedding felt like a sharp blade. A thread of very poisonous light flashed across his eyes.

“Qing Shui, you’re gonna die! The Mu Clan’s woman is mine. Any woman I lay my eyes on won’t escape from me!”

Gu Song sat in the middle of the courtyard and thought about what options he had. He could rely on the poison, but he wasn’t sure if the poison would work. If it didn’t work, he knew he wouldn’t stand a chance against Qing Shui.

“That’s right! Brother Madman! As long as Brother Madman is willing to help me, that brat is sure to die!” A sinister smile appeared across Gu Song’s face.

Gu Song stood up. Without pausing, he made his way towards an isolated courtyard. He was looking for his cousin, who was called a martial maniac by others. Behind his back, he was known as the Martial Madman.

As soon as Gu Song arrived at the courtyard, an explosion rang out. A thick black smoke rose up as the entire house had been blown up. A man dressed in shabby and ragged clothes came out,

looking extremely pathetic.

“Big brother! It exploded again.....”

Gu Song looked at Gu Wu, who didn't seem to be surprised about it at all. It was evident this was very normal to him.

“Little Song! What brings you here?” A loud and clear voice rang out.

“It's because I missed my brother!” Gu Song laughed mischievously.

“Save it, brat! You wouldn't be here if it was about nothing. Let me clean myself up. Wait for me in this room!” Gu Wu spoke calmly and left for the other room.

Gu Song watched the tall and strongly built man leave. This was the man of his age whom he admired the most. Others said that he was a martial maniac, a martial madman. They even said that he had gone haywire from cultivating martial arts. But he knew that this cousin of his was not crazy, nor a madman. He was in fact, a prodigy.

Other than cultivating martial arts, he showed no interest in any other things. This was also the reason why Gu Song had the chance to become the young chief. He might even be able to take over the Poison Mountain Stockade in the future. If Gu Wu had been interested in becoming the chief of Poison Mountain Stockade, the

position would definitely have been his and Gu Song would never have had a chance of becoming the young chief.

The world outside knew that there was a martial madman in Poison Mountain Stockade. It was rumored that he was very strong, especially after he had once killed an entire clan by himself. Rumors said that among the murdered was a powerful man who had just broken through to the early stages of Martial Emperor.

That was five years ago.

Despite all the rumors floating outside about the martial madman, some core members of the Poison Mountain Stockade knew how powerful Gu Wu actually was. It was just that he was a bit of a vicious and merciless individual. He actually treated his relatives and friends very well. Therefore, he had the highest position among his brothers and even Gu Song admired him very much.

Gu Wu changed into a fresh set of clothes in no time and looked way better than earlier. He still looked quite young now, with a particularly bulky body. If an outsider saw him, they would never think that this man was a martial madman. He would only appear as a very calm person to others.

“Big brother!”

“What’s wrong? From the look of your face, did someone provoke you? You’re not able to settle it yourself?” Gu Wu asked

lightly while he smiled at Gu Song.

He had quite a pleasant smile. Just by sitting there, his presence made others feel a little pressure. It wasn't his bulky body, but rather the aura that he exuded.

“Big brother! That Mu Qing from the Mu Clan is about to get married!” Gu Song hesitated for a moment before speaking.

“Oh! That slipped my mind. You have always been interested in her, but this is not a very appropriate thing to ask of me, is it?” Gu Wu dully said to Gu Song. He thought that Gu Song was going to steal a bride again.

“The person she's going to marry is Qing Shui, the young man who eliminated the Sky Prison Sect all by himself. He is a youth who is younger than you by about 10 years. Now, the entire capital city is saying that he is the top cultivator among the younger generation. Even I and the other two elders were at a loss yesterday. It was madness!” Gu Song said in a disgruntled voice.

He only mentioned the matter casually without saying much else, because he knew that this big brother of his had always considered himself to be the top cultivator of the younger generation. All this time, nobody could compete with him due to his powerful strength and poison. It must be unpleasant for him to hear that someone else had stripped him of his title now.

Furthermore, Gu Song knew that Gu Wu would definitely compete with Qing Shui if he heard this news. All he had to do was

just exaggerate a little more. It would make them get into a fight for sure. He must cripple the brat, so that he couldn't marry the woman from the Mu Clan.

“Do the uncles know about your problem?” A sharp and powerful Qi rose in Gu Wu's eyes, as he calmly asked.

“They know but they said to let the younger generation solve this problem,” Gu Song answered helplessly. He felt that he was not Qing Shui's opponent.

“Then I shall go with you. Come over and tell me about it. It's been awhile since I last had a battle with anyone,” Gu Wu said with a smile.

“You are the top cultivator among the younger generation but you still have to be cautious. That Qing Shui is rumored to be very impressive,” Gu Song warned seriously.

“Alright, hopefully this Qing Shui doesn't disappoint me!” Gu Wu's will to fight was raging in his eyes. It had been a long time since he had such an intense will to fight.

Gu Song felt ecstatic in his heart. He knew that the more he reminded his brother to beware, the more he could demonstrate Qing Shui's strength and provoke Gu Wu's will to fight. Gu Wu was very strong in cultivation, but he was way inferior to Gu Song when it came to handling personal matters. Moreover, he never took these youths seriously.

The rumors that Qing Shui had eliminated two powerful early Martial Emperor cultivators previously spread like wildfire, but it didn't seem like a big deal to Gu Wu. Besides, if he exerted the full potential of his poison, two early Martial Emperors cultivators were nothing to him either.

Although he was the “strongest of the younger generation”, he was about to lose the title at his relatively older age. Before he lost that title though, it wasn't a such a bad thing to drag another potential holder of that name down.

.....

Qing Shui and Mu Qing spent the first day of the New Year together. Tomorrow would be the day they held their wedding reception and their wedding day. Although everything was happening in a rush, it didn't interfere with their emotions.

Qing Shui had specially forged the Violet Jade Pendant, Violet Jade Bracelet and the Violet Jade Ring for Mu Qing. Not only were they forged exquisitely, they also had decent additional abilities. This was especially true for the Violet Jade Bracelet, which increased destructive power and damage by 100%...

This effectively doubled her damage. Qing Shui and Mu Qing each had one on. Mu Qing liked this. This made her feel like the two of them were lovers and that they were inseparable.

The Violet Jade Bracelet didn't actually increase her strength directly. In terms of defense and energy, nothing changed, but any

attack would be launched with the additional immense destructive power. Getting this effect would require some Qi of Xiantian to be channeled into the Violet Jade Bracelet.

AST 929 – Wedding, She Is The Mistress of Silken Web Ridge

On the first day of New Year, basically all of the influential figures in the capital city had received invitation cards from the Mu Clan in just a day.

Godly Sword Clan!

The Old Ancestor of the Godly Sword Clan was reading the invitation card in his hand. The expression on his face was tranquil, but it gradually turned grave. Recalling the things that Qing Shui had said and done before, he silently made a decision in his heart.

“Somebody!”

Two middle-aged men came in very quickly. One of them was the guard at the entrance that was addressed as ‘Brother Hui’ by that youth. The other one hurriedly bowed when he saw the Old Ancestor. “What is your order, Old Ancestor?”

“Get the Clan’s Head and the few Vice Clan’s Heads here. Tell them I have an important matter to discuss with them,” the Old Ancestor of the Godly Sword Clan spoke very slowly, yet his speech had an indescribable rhythm to it.

“Right away!”

In about 15 minutes, eight elderly men stood at the entrance of the door. However, all of them appeared to be extremely healthy and strong despite their age.

“Come in!” The old man’s voice rang out!

The eight elderly men entered in a straight line, with the Godly Sword Clan’s Head leading. The elderly man stood tall and straight. The fish tattoo covering his body, the gold sabre that he carried and the silver attire that he was dressed in caused him to appear intensely oppressive.

The other seven men were all clad in brown robes but they were all exuding a powerful aura. If outsiders were here, they would definitely sigh in amazement at the glamorous inner structure of the Godly Sword Clan. Although the Sky Prison Sect had eight sovereigns, they were of a different caliber than the eight here. On top of that, these men were overseen by an Old Ancestor.

“Old Ancestor!”

The eight elderly men bowed to the Old Ancestor of the Godly Sword Clan. The respect in their eyes came from the bottom of their hearts. The Godly Sword Clan was able to attain their current position thanks to this old man before them. With the old man in the Godly Sword Clan, their position of being the overlord in the capital city would not waver.

“Alright, take a seat everyone!” The old man waved casually.

There were nine tutor chairs in the room. The Old Ancestor of the Godly Sword Clan was sitting on one while there were eight of them across from him. Everyone slowly sat down. They knew that the Old Ancestor had an important matter to discuss with them for him to summon all of them here.

“I believe all of you already know about us, the Godly Sword Clan, forming an alliance with the Mu Clan, right?” The old man spoke slowly.

“Yes!” The leading old man, who was dressed in the silver robes with fish tattoo and gold sabre, answered.

“What are your opinions?” The Old Ancestor of the Godly Sword Clan continued asking.

“This youth is very powerful, he definitely won’t be a person of no particular talent in the future. The Mu Clan couldn’t make him stay. Don’t you think that forming an alliance with them is not entirely worth it?” The elderly man pointed out after thinking.

“How about you?” The Old Ancestor of the Godly Sword Clan asked the third elderly man, who was sitting across from him.

“With the rumors going on out there and the things that have happened, I have a feeling that this youth takes friendship very seriously. On top of that, the Mu Clan also seems to be studying on formation techniques and they were able to break the Sky Prison Sabre Formation of the Sky Prison Sect. I have a hunch that the Mu Clan will surpass the Sky Prison Sect very soon. Perhaps they

are still inferior to the Godly Sword Clan right now, but it's very hard to say the same in the future. With the unstable situations that are going to arise everywhere, joining forces with the Mu Clan is also a good thing. That Spirit Gathering Formation will benefit us," the elderly man answered slowly.

"Hahaha. I am relieved to hear that from you. As long as all of you maintain the same vigor, we, the Godly Sword Clan will definitely be safe. The younger generation needs to be cultivated vigorously. I am here to inform you all today that we are attending the wedding reception tomorrow together."

The rest were startled, but very quickly nodded their heads!

.....

Other than spending time with Mu Qing, Qing Shui was studying formation techniques. The formation techniques stemmed from combined attacks. For instance, if a few people joined hands they would be able to amplify the effects several times. All the battle groups in the World of the Nine Continents had combined assaults and troop formations. But they had merely scratched the tip of an iceberg and those couldn't really be truly considered as real formation techniques.

The formation techniques that Qing Shui used required the energies of Heaven and Earth, which were the five elements of the Eight Trigrams and the Spiritual Qi of Heaven and Earth. The wonders of nature were boundless. Qing Shui was able to barely use it, yet he wasn't able to thoroughly study it.

Just like the Nine Palace Steps and the Nine Palace Position's miraculous leap. Just this step would be able to block countless people outside the entrance. No one was able to jump over it. Besides, there shouldn't be many who knew about the Nine Palace Position, so there should be even fewer who had thought about jumping over the Nine Palace Position.

Qing Shui lay down in the Realm of Violet Jade Immortal, thinking about the wedding reception tomorrow. He knew that the traditions here were quite similar to the Hundred Miles City. There would be a wedding arena and guests could even challenge the groom and bride. Of course, the groom and bride could turn down the challenge, but it was very rare for someone to challenge the newly weds.

However, Qing Shui had a feeling that it would be very difficult to predict what would happen tomorrow. He wasn't really worried about it. If something happened, then he would just settle everything here before he left.

.....

It was the second day of New Year and the joyous celebration had just started. For the Mu Clan, today was a day with two joyous events. It was still early in the morning and the guests had already turned up one after another, carrying generous congratulatory gifts with them.

Many people from the Mu Clan stood at the big entrance to greet

the guests.

After about an hour!

A group of about a hundred people was coming from afar. Mu Fengyang welcomed them with a smile as soon as he saw them. It was the Godly Sword Clan. The Old Ancestor and the other eight elderly men had come. This was quite an honor.

“Old Master, you are here. Please come inside. Big brothers, please come inside too.” Mu Fengyang was also a junior in the presence of the old man.

The congratulatory gifts were carried inside from behind them. “No need to mind us, go entertain the others!” The old man chuckled.

“Old Master, you’ve come all the way here.” Qing Shui and Mu Qing came out too. They were startled when they saw the old man and the others, but immediately gave them a smile.

“Qing Shui is marrying the Mu Clan’s lass. How can I not come?” The old man laughed heartily.

The Dongfang Aristocrat Clan had arrived!

The Yin Clan had arrived!

Quite a number of guests came in one after another. They were all influential figures in the capital city. Qing Shui didn't see that Yin Yuanjiao from the Yin Clan. The people of the Yin Clan were very courteous and respectful.

Qing Shui didn't really have any reaction. The Yin Clan was no longer capable of causing any troubles now. If they still couldn't tell chalk from cheese, they were going to perish sooner or later. The disparity between the Yin Clan and Mu Clan was even greater now.

There were some familiar faces among the Dongfang Aristocrat Clan, so Qing Shui immediately sent Dong Yan and Sun Yan to entertain them.....

The Silken Web Ridge had arrived!

The Poison Mountain Stockade had arrived!

Qing Shui was also startled when he heard these two names. For them to come together, it seemed like it was going to be lively today. The Sky Prison Sect had perished. Otherwise, they would definitely be standing together with those two.

The Silken Web Ridge was a powerful force from the capital city. They could be both good and evil but were slightly better than the Poison Mountain Stockade. The members of the Silken Web Ridge were all women. Their weapons were whips and they cultivated charm techniques. At the same time, they were also proficient in poison and were skilled in hidden weapons. A sect that could be

involved with the Poison Mountain Stockade would not be a simple sect.

When Qing Shui saw their troops, he was also shocked. The number of people from the Godly Sword Clan that came earlier was already considered as quite a lot to Qing Shui. The only ones that went in were the Old Ancestor of the Godly Sword Clan and the other eight elderly men. The rest remained here to stand guard. This immediately let the others know the relationship between the Mu Clan and the Godly Sword Clan.

There were 400 people from the Poison Mountain Stockade and the Silken Web Ridge. The Silken Web Ridge had fewer people, probably less than a hundred of them. However, each and everyone of them were young ladies with an alluring body figure. Standing together, they were like a cluster of flowers, causing many people to stare in awe.

Qing Shui was shocked when he saw their leader.....

He simply couldn't believe his own eyes. How could she be here? On top of that, she was the leading woman of the Silken Web Ridge.

Yu He!

That stunning beauty that led them turned out to be Yu He.

.....

After Yu He left the Hundred Flowers Valley with the others, they returned to the Hundred Miles City and subsequently caught wind of Qing Shui's journey towards the Eastern Victory Divine Continent. The Silken Web Ridge of the Eastern Victory Divine Continent happened to be one of the strongholds of the Hundred Flowers Valley.

The Hundred Flowers Granny wanted everyone to know of the Hundred Flowers Valley's existence, so the Hundred Flowers Valley had strongholds in the Greencloud Continent, Central Continent, Eastern Victory Divine Continent, Southern Viewing Continent and Northern Sacred Lu Continent.

When she knew that Qing Shui had gone to the Eastern Victory Divine Continent, she hurried there too. She had now attained the large success stage of the [Hundred Flowers Secret Technique] and felt that she was worthy enough stand before him. She could be of help to him now instead of being a burden.

It was just one day before New Year by the time she arrived here. She heard much news about Qing Shui but didn't manage to find him in time. She was elated at the thought of meeting Qing Shui. She could finally see him again after she had stubbornly refused him back then. She was hoping to give him a surprise here at the Eastern Victory Continent, but she didn't expect to receive an invitation card on the very next day...

Once again seeing that apathetic face of her dreams, Yu He realized that it had become a little unfamiliar to her after such a long time. He was no longer that young man who only wanted to

take advantage of her. He had grown up into a mature man.

“Sister Yu!”

Qing Shui called out in surprise. He was truly very surprised. He briskly walked towards her, while Yu He stared blankly at the man before her and seemed to be lost in her thoughts. Her beautiful autumn-like eyes were a little moist.

Qing Shui was staring at Yu He. He was also extremely shocked in his heart. Just what had happened for a Xiantian cultivator to reach such heights?

.....

Qing Shui tried jogging his memory. All of a sudden he realized that he seemed to have not seen her for many years. It had indeed been many years. Back then he wasn't even 20 years old yet, but now he was about to be 32 years old...

He felt that Yu He strength was somewhat indistinct. It was giving off a dangerous aura, to the point that he thought she would be able to instantly kill an early Martial Emperor cultivator. Her temperament had changed a lot over time. She was like a big sister of the next door neighbor back then, but now she was like a capable woman with a high position. She even had the aura of a sect's sovereign and she was still as hardworking as she was before...

“Qing Shui, today is your big day. Sister Yu is here to congratulate you!” Yu He said with a smile. Her smile was like a hundred of flowers blooming.

Qing Shui had a lot of doubts but he couldn't ask her right now, so he laughed at Mu Qing who was beside her. “I knew Sister Yu from more than ten years ago. Why don't you show her the way in?”

“Sister Yu, let us go in and have a nice talk!” Mu Qing smiled at Yu He.

Her sudden appearance puzzled many around them. No one expected Qing Shui to have such relation with the leader of the Silken Web Ridge. Among all, the Poison Mountain Stockade had the most unpleasant expression on their faces.

Gu Song clenched his fists tightly. Mu Qing had gone over to the other side. He was stunned when he laid his eyes on the new Mistress of the Silken Web Ridge, who had just arrived two days ago. But he didn't have the guts to be involved with her. He knew that this beauty was a femme fatale and one would probably not know how he had died at her hands. He had a feeling that his plans were going to be ruined today and threw a glance at the ancient thing that was frowning beside him.

If even the Silken Web Ridge got involved with the Mu Clan and the Godly Sword Clan, then the Poison Mountain Stockade would be in a precarious position.

This turn of events had wavered the objectives of Poison Mountain Stockade's visit. Many knew that the Mu Clan had made the right move in the wedding now. They would definitely be able to accomplish great things in times to come. The happiest of all was naturally the Mu Clan.

At first, the Mu Clan was still a little worried after seeing the formation of the Poison Mountain Stockade and the Silken Web Ridge. After all, these two sects that had joined together were still very powerful and it was impossible to guard against their methods of doing things.

AST 930 – Inborn Poison Physique, Battle At The Wedding Banquet

When it was noon, no more people came and the banquet started. The tables and chairs laid out in the backyard were basically full. Even though it was winter, large-scale wedding banquets were mostly outdoors since wedding banquets tended to come with an arena battle.

Mu Fengyang stood at the “main arena”, put his fists together and said, “Welcome, everyone. Today is the big day for Qing Shui and our Mu Qing...”

Qing Shui and Mu Qing went around, receiving toasts from some people. This was a formality, generally with representatives of those powerful sects. Right now, Qing Shui’s status and identity were very special.

Silken Web Ridge and Poison Mountain Stockade were present as well!

It might be because of where they were seated or due to other reasons but after Qing Shui and Mu Qing went to the tables with the Godly Sword Clan and some others, they first went to where Yu He was at with a few ladies from Silken Web Ridge. Qing Shui didn’t know what to feel when they were walking toward Yu He.

He didn’t even know what he felt toward her right now. There weren’t the vague feelings he had toward her in the past and the things that had happened between them were like a dream.

After all, they had not met for many years. Back then, there was not a deeply engraved love between them, but Qing Shui knew that he had taken quite a lot of advantage of her. When he eventually brought it up to her, she had rejected him.

He didn't know if Yu He didn't want his love, which was as if it was given out of charity. Maybe right now, Qing Shui still didn't know what Yu He was thinking back then. He had never felt that he was trying to offer his love to her out of charity, but instead it had taken a lot out of him to have come to that decision.

Time had passed and although he was very agitated when he saw Yu He earlier, Qing Shui felt that he had met someone he knew. She hadn't gotten married. Why had she come to the Eastern Victory Divine Continent? With her being together with the people from Silken Web Ridge, does that mean that she had been here for a very long time...

Qing Shui then thought of how he had been here for over a month. If she was here, would she have come earlier? Could it be that she hadn't been here for long either?. But the Silken Web Ridge and her...

Since he couldn't understand, Qing Shui decided not to think about it. Everything happened in a short moment. He raised his cup and Mu Qing did the same. Yu He and the other ladies all stood up as well.

“Sister Yu, I'm happy that you guys can come. I'll bottom up my

cup.”

Yu He also smiled and said a few polite words before letting Qing Shui and Mu Qing move onto the next table.

Very quickly, Qing Shui and Mu Qing arrived at the table where the people from Poison Mountain Stockade were seated. No matter what, they would still have to go over. There were three old men there and two young men. Qing Shui could recognize only one of them.

It was the young master from the Poison Mountain Stockade!

However, when Qing Shui saw the other young man, his brows furrowed slightly. This young man was very strong. Most importantly, he had a strange power. If not for the fact that Qing Shui's spirit energy had attained a great breakthrough, he wouldn't have noticed it.

Poison Technique!

Inborn Poison Physique!

This was a poison technique. Qing Shui hadn't expected that the Qi of Xiantian in this young man's body to be poisonous Qi and his body was also a poison physique. Most importantly, he was a Martial Emperor cultivator.

“Today is the big day for myself and Qing`er. I'm very honored

that senior could come. We'll raise a toast to everyone." Qing Shui smiled and said.

To begin with, the Mu Clan didn't have any grudge against Poison Mountain Stockade. There were only mild disagreements with Gu Song. However, Gu Song was the reason that Gu Wu had dissatisfactions against Qing Shui, bringing up the matter of who would be the top expert amongst the younger generation.

Gu Song had exaggerated very badly to say that Qing Shui had humiliated Poison Mountain Stockade, causing Gu Wu to wish to challenge Qing Shui or rather, to fight for that useless title. However, Qing Shui didn't know about all this. He only knew that the young master wouldn't let it go at that.

The people from Poison Mountain Stockade politely met their cups with Qing Shui and then the couple quickly left. A junior from Mu Clan walked up the arena and greeted everyone with a bow.

"Everyone, welcome! I'll perform a sword dance to raise the atmosphere!"

This was a custom, for a person to first perform a sword dance before the others joined in or issued a challenge. However, since this was a wedding banquet, everything done was to raise the atmosphere and even battles would be appropriately stopped.

Therefore, generally, the people who took part would be the juniors from the clans. Most of the people who came to offer their

good wishes wouldn't take part and even if they did, it would only be for fun, to raise the tension. Everything would just be for the sake of performance.

Of course, if the two parties were evenly matched, they could have a spar. However, it would only be a friendly one. Even if one was able to defeat his opponent, one would still leave some leeway.

There would still be situations where people would get hurt, but there wouldn't be many of those scenes. However, in a world where the strong were revered and with such a big event going on, it wouldn't be much of a problem even if some blood was shed. However, no one would dare to create such havoc if the host was a powerful clan.

There would also be sparrings within the clan internally, to raise the atmosphere.

The junior from the Mu Clan who was standing on the arena was performing a sword dance while using the Duality Steps. To be able to take the stage, even if he wasn't the strongest junior, the person would also have to be one of the better performers.

Everyone here was just looking from the side and even felt that everything would end after a simple performance. However, once the person had started the performance, everyone was astonished.

Although they could not see the footwork clearly, they discovered that it was very practical and had a strong damaging prowess. It immediately drew in the majority of the people's

attention.

The young man on the arena was only in his twenties and was a Martial King. However, he moved in quick flashes on the arena, moving erratically, while demonstrating the Mu Clan's Brushing Willow Sword Art. Many people could tell what sword technique he was using but when used with this strange foot technique, the damaging prowess was increased to become at least twice as strong as before.

“To think that the Mu Clan has such an amazing foot technique?”

“The Mu Clan today is no longer what it was before. It must be related to this young man.”

“The Mu Clan is really lucky!” That old man who was the leader of the Poison Mountain Stockade let out a sigh and said.

“Since so many of us have come today, shall we join in for some fun?” An old man next to him hesitated for a moment before asking.

“Silken Web Ridge will no longer stand together with us. This new lady who has come has taken over the position of the leader of the Silken Web Ridge and is very much against us. Where on earth did this lady come from?” The old man said, dispirited.

“Haha, of course we should fight. Why shouldn't we? Didn't they

set up this arena so that we can have a spar?” Just then, Gu Wu smiled and said.

When Gu Wu said this, even the other two old men looked at him in astonishment. Gu Wu’s status in the Poison Mountain Stockade was not low, especially amongst them, the core members. It was because they all knew how terrifying Gu Wu was.

“Today, if we don’t take the edge off this young man, even if we were to come to this city in the future, we’ll only be able to lay low,” an old man who had not spoken till now said.

The old man looked ordinary, but he had a pair of especially bright eyes. He appeared very elegant as well, giving off the aura of one in power.

“There mustn’t be any deaths!” The old man who was in the middle let out a sigh and said.

“Don’t worry!” Gu Wu smiled.

Very quickly, a young man from Poison Mountain Stockade went up. The young man had a big build and a poison scorpion embroidered on his clothes. After he went up, he cupped his hands and said, “Wang Dong from Poison Mountain Stockade. Please give me your guidance!”

The young man from the Mu Clan was stunned for a short while before he quickly recovered, cupped his hands and said, “Mu Lin.

Please make your move!”

This young man was an internal member from the Mu Clan and was from the same generation as Mu Fengyang’s grandson. The young man from the Poison Mountain Stockade who had gone up was about the same cultivation level as Mu Lin, but the spar went very quickly.

Two moves!

With a leap, the opponent’s black sabre was pushed back and Mu Lin then suddenly advanced with the Duality Steps. Then, with a “Brushing Willow Welcoming The Wind”, his sword was held against the opponent’s neck.

“Thank you for letting me win!”

The young man from Poison Mountain Stockade cupped his fists together and came down from the arena. In a battle like this, it was unfair to the Poison Mountain Stockade because they had held their skill with poison, but yet it wasn’t appropriate for them to be using poison in an event like this.

However, if they were to not use any poison, they would definitely lose!

The Poison Mountain Stockade lost another two consecutive rounds. However, when someone went up once again, it was actually Gu Song. He smiled and said to the young man on the

arena, “Gu Song. Please give me your guidance!”

Mu Lin knew the gap with the opponent he was up against, but he still gritted his teeth and went up. Sometimes, cultivators could not shrink back and thus, he charged forth.

The Duality Steps did still require one to be strong, but his abilities were far from a match for Gu Song’s. When Gu Song saw the longsword thrusting at him, he threw out a punch which was covered with a thick layer of black fist Qi.

Ding!

Mu Lin was sent flying back, spurting out a large mouthful of fresh blood in mid-air and fell off the arena.

Gu Song’s expression was weird and he smiled awkwardly, “I’m sorry, I lost control. Thank goodness Brother Mu is fine. Let’s just say that this is adding on to the joy for this great event today.”

Mu Lang caught Mu Lin and looked up at the arena in fury. Everyone could tell that Poison Mountain Stockade didn’t come with good intentions.

“Eldest Brother, let me go up!” A member of the Mu Clan said.

“You’re not his match. Let me do it!” The strong looking guy got someone to bring down Mu Lin who had fainted. With a move, he appeared on the arena and stared at Gu Song.

“Brother Mu Lang, I had already held back earlier. I didn’t expect Brother Lin to still be injured.” Gu Song said politely to Mu Lang.

“It’s nothing. It’s inevitable for there to be casualties in a fight. When I saw Brother Gu Song, I really itched for a fight too. Please do give me your guidance!” Mu Lang drew out an emerald colored thin sword and said, smiling hypocritically.

In the past, even though Mu Lang had something against Qing Shui, he had changed after knowing how powerful Qing Shui was and how much he had done for the Mu Clan. He did what he did for the Mu Clan and targeted events, not people.

He had also received a jade pendant from Qing Shui and he received a lot of advantages just by carrying it with him. Now, even if he was up against Gu Song, he felt very confident. After all, Gu Song was the Young Master of Poison Mountain Stockade and rumor had it that he was very proficient in the use of poison. Therefore, he was very nervous. On this arena, he didn’t think that the opponent dared to use poison. Although it was a bit sneaky to be using poison, there were no rules which said that they couldn’t be used in a battle.

“Take this!”

A stream of crimson glow flashed on Mu Lang’s thin sword. At the same time, he exuded a strong aura and attacked with the Duality Steps!

Brushing Willow Welcoming The Wind !

Even though it was the same Duality Steps, when used with different techniques by people of different cultivation level, the effects were completely different. What Mu Lang had unleashed was something that even left some powerful experts stunned. It was too profound and too terrifying!

Boom!

Gu Song didn't dare to let down his guard either. Mu Lang appeared very young. Although he was the same generation as Mu Qing, he was much older than her.

Although Mu Lang was now about the same cultivation as Mu Qing, due to their difference in age, his talent was far from a match for Mu Qing's. However, as a guy, he still held a great chance of becoming the next head of Mu Clan.

On the first contact, Gu Song was pushed back several steps. His face turned pale and the black sword he was holding flashed a gleam of black glow, releasing a one foot long black aura.

“Poison weapon!” Qing Shui looked at that black longsword.

AST 931 – Gu Song Dies, Powerful Poison Physique, Sacred Venom Jade Art

Poison weapon!

When Qing Shui saw that poison weapon, he was shocked but he calmed himself down quickly. That poison weapon was much worse off, as compared to his Poison Dragon Dagger. It could only be considered the weakest poison weapon.

The main thing to a poison weapon was that it must have a poison core, a tempered poison core. Only a weapon which had a poison core could be called a poison weapon. One's Qi of Xiantian could pass through the poison core, stimulating its poison nature, causing one's attack to be poisonous by nature.

Gu Song activated his poison weapon. That black aura was a clear indication to other people that it was a poison weapon and that this was an open and aboveboard battle. He then stomped down hard with both legs.

A faint black aura spread out and he slashed toward Mu Lang with in mid-air.

Mu Lang circulated his abilities to its peak and the Violet Jade Pendant he was holding let out a cooling aura which circulated in his body, causing his mind to be very much awake.

Reverse Chop of the Weeping Willow!

Mu Lang's body suddenly inclined forward as his thin sword slashed out toward Gu Song as if it was a fine sword net. The Duality Steps allowed him to instantly reach a spot which Gu Song would find hard to reach.

Poison Jade Sword!

Gu Song suddenly twisted his body weirdly, the longsword in his hand exuded a great black glow and slashed against Mu Lang's sword net.

Ding ding...

A crisp sound rang out as the two of them retreated quickly. Gu Song first retreated before dashing out toward Mu Lang fiercely. Right now, the fight had already escalated into the air.

Mu Lang was pushed back from the impact and a hint of black aura was seen on him, as he kept up with his fighting stance. Right now, Mu Lang's heart was in turmoil. He realized that his body had become stiff and when such a situation happened in battle, it could be fatal.

He knew that this was the effect of the opponent's poison Qi. Right now, Gu Song swung his black sword and pounced toward Mu Lang, his sword piercing toward Mu Lang's throat.

"Lad, you dare?!" An old man from the Mu Clan let out a loud

bellow and was about to step up.

After all, this was a wedding banquet, but the people from Poison Mountain Stockade had wanted to deal a fatal blow. Mu Lang held an important role in the Mu Clan. In such an arena battle, other people were not allowed to step up to stop it, regardless who the person was. This was unless the person who interfered was one who could dominate the rest of the people. However, the participants on the arena could admit their loss since it was not a battle to the death. However, one could only count themselves unlucky if they were to be killed if they didn't throw in the flag. It was normal for accidents to happen.

The old man was stopped by a few other old men.

Mu Qing looked toward Qing Shui who didn't show any changes to his expression and then turned her gaze toward the arena. Gu Song's expression was very twisted and he said, "It's not too late to admit your loss."

His voice was very loud, clearly letting the others hear. It was because he knew that Mu Lang could neither move nor talk.

"Brother Mu really has a strong backbone. Then let's just fight it out! We'll leave our lives to fate!" With that, he suddenly accelerated and dashed out toward Mu Lang.

Mu Lang's consciousness was very clear, but he couldn't move. He looked at the longsword that was thrust toward him, but was not able to say a single word. At that moment, he was not afraid of

death. If he could kill this sly guy, he would have no regrets even if he were to die.

“Channel your Qi of Xiantian into the Violet Jade Pendant and recite the Violetjade Pureheart!” Just then, Qing Shui’s voice rang out next to Mu Lang.

When Mu Lang heard Qing Shui’s voice, the feeling was as if a drowning person had managed to grab a life buoy.

He followed Qing Shui’s instructions without any hesitation and true enough, he managed to regain control over his body. Before he moved, Qing Shui’s voice rang out once again.

“Use the Duality Steps’ Duality Tornado to advance, then use Brushing Willow Slaughter!”

Hearing Qing Shui’s instructions, Mu Lang did as instructed without any hesitation.

With a flash, he managed to dodge that incoming longsword just in the nick of time.

Brushing Willow Slaughter !

A killing move in the Brushing Willow Sword Art!

Pfft!

The crisp sound of a throat being slash rang out. When Mu Lang knew that he could move, he had wanted to kill his opponent. When he heard Qing Shui's words, he didn't care if he could kill but trusted what Qing Shui had said without any hesitation.

When he saw Gu Song collapsing, he felt very happy. It was because he knew that Qing Shui also wanted to kill him. This was for the best.

"It was a moment of life and death and I wasn't able to hold back in time. Life and death are decreed by fate. I'm very sorry." Mu Lang cupped his hands together and said apologetically.

Silence filled the place. The situation at that point was very dangerous, but for some reason Mu Lang could suddenly move. However, seeing that the Poison Mountain Stockade's Young Master was killed, many people still felt very happy.

This was the case especially for the Mu Clan. Earlier, they had known that the Young Master from the Poison Mountain Stockade had wanted to kill Mu Lang and now, he had managed to turn the tables back on him. The prowess of that last move even caused everyone's eyes to light up.

This time around, it was very quiet, with no one saying a word. The people from the Poison Mountain Stockade glared at the young man on the arena in fury, but there was nothing they could do. Very quickly, two members from the Poison Mountain Stockade went up to retrieve Gu Song's corpse.

Gu Wu sat at the side, his fist clenched tightly. He suddenly stood up like a huge black eagle. A faint layer of black fog started to surround his body, causing others to be unable to see his face clearly.

Poison Mountain Stockade's martial madman!

People started to talk within themselves. Many people knew of this guy from the Poison Mountain Stockade. After all, he had claimed the limelight for himself when he wiped out an entire aristocrat clan. He was said to be the top expert amongst the younger generations.

The people from the Poison Mountain Stockade were feeling very grim. Everything was dependent on Gu Wu who was now on the arena. If Gu Wu could hang on, then Poison Mountain Stockade would still have hope. If anything were to happen to him, then Poison Mountain Stockade would have to lay low and live their lives in the future...

“Are you ready?” Gu Wu looked at Mu Lang and said softly. It had been a while since he had fought. He looked at the surroundings and squinted his eyes slightly.

“Qing`er, I'll go up and take a look. You can go have a rest at where Sister Yu is at.”

“Qing Shui...”

“Don’t worry, I’ll be fine!”

This was the big day for him and Mu Qing. He didn’t wish for there to be any accidents or unhappiness. Therefore, he decided to step up himself. The opponent was a little eerie and even he felt a little uneasy.

It was fortunate that his spirit energy had attained a breakthrough. Otherwise, he would really have to deploy other means.

“Let me have a go! Brother Mu, you must be tired too, go take a break!” Qing Shui suddenly appeared before Mu Lang.

Nine Palace Steps!

Qing Shui had used the Nine Palace Steps to head up to the arena.

Qing Shui’s movement caused many people to draw in a breath of cold air. If Qing Shui were to launch a sudden attack, how many of them would be able to dodge the attack? Many people were wondering if they themselves would be able to dodge.

Mu Lang looked at Qing Shui gratefully and left the arena. Qing Shui looked at the guy, his Nature Energy circulating automatically. The same went for his Diamond Qi, Diamond Protection and Diamond Crossing Rivers.

The other thing was that his other techniques were also circulating to the limits and also initiated his expert level Focused Concentration.

Yu He was also looking at Qing Shui, feeling worried. She had no idea what level Qing Shui had attained, but she knew that that guy from Poison Mountain Stockade was very strong.

“Sister Yu, you’re very worried for Qing Shui,” Mu Qing looked at Yu He’s expression and said softly.

Yu He shivered, smiled and looked at Mu Qing, “We came from the same place and had even partnered up to manage a restaurant before. He was also the one who had cured my grandfather’s injuries. He calls me Sister Yu.”

“Haha, Sister Yu, you’re thinking too far. He has a few wives and I’m only one of them. For a guy like him, no one is able to keep him for herself.” Mu Qing thought of how he had repeatedly emphasized that he already has wives and there was still that drawing. She really wanted to have a look at what the other women in his life looked like.

She even heard that he already has children...

“Sister Yu is old!” Yu He smiled, shook her head and said.

“Sister Yu isn’t old. You still have great elegance and talent. Even my heart beats quicker when I see a mature beauty like Sister Yu.

Didn't you see the gazes from the people around you? They can't wait to devour you," Mu Qing smiled and said.

"So even the domineering and dignified Miss Mu will say something like this." Yu He smiled and blinked at Mu Qing. The mature lady's cuteness caused even Mu Qing to be stunned. However, she flushed up and hadn't even had a chance to say anything when the fight on the arena had already started.

Gu Wu reached out his right hand and a gush of black Qi spewed out, turning into what seemed to be a material longsword. It was flashing with a heart throbbing aura that seemed to be like black flames.

Qing Shui brought out his Violet Star Thunder God. No matter how weak his opponent was, he planned to do his best to deal with him. He hadn't expected this guy to have an inborn poison physique and this made him gave the thought of using poison.

He felt that even the Five-Colored Poison might not be that effective. There were many amazing and strange people in the world of the nine continents. Although he had felt that his cultivation realm was considered to be not bad or rather, quite good amongst the younger generation, he hadn't ever thought of the possibility that there were no youngsters who would be able to surpass him.

Ten Thousand Great Thunderbolt!

Nine Palace Steps!

Qing Shui leaped up and in an instant, reached behind Gu Wu and smashed down with his hammer.

Boom!

A ripple appeared behind Gu Wu and then it shattered, as if it had hit against a barrier. Then, Gu Wu's "black sword" thrust toward Qing Shui at great speed.

The strong stench caused him to feel nauseous and Qing Shui leaped away, stopping his breath.

Poison Qi!

To think that he had such a treasure with him that could protect himself. To think Gu Wu had managed to stop his Ten Thousand Great Thunderbolt attack.

The hammer's damaging prowess was very strong but it was slightly slower. Moreover, Qing Shui's Nine Palace Steps was best matched with agility and thus, after over ten rounds of exchanges with Gu Wu, he changed to his Violet Jade Sword.

"It seems like I'll need to forge my Big Dipper Sword."

Basic Sword Techniques!

Nature Energy!

Qing Shui channeled his Nature Energy onto the Violet Jade Sword!

Brilliant violet light from the Violet Jade Sword surged up, however, the pressure was getting increasingly stronger. When it swung out, it was as if it brought along with it the powers of Heaven and Earth.

Boom!

Gu Wu was pushed back and Qing Shui quickly retreated as well. The Nature Energy, together with the Violetjade Pureheart, was able to barely push back Gu Wu's poison Qi.

“Inborn Poison Physique is truly powerful!”

He knew why the Poison Mountain Stockade dared to act like such a big shot here now. With just this ordinary attack, as long as he were to come into contact with the opponent, most early Martial Emperor wouldn't be able to accept this.

He was filled with poison all over. However, it was a pity that such a heaven-defying existence was a strong contender against the Heart of Seven Orifices. It also had a fatal flaw—short lifespan.

Gu Wu was also astonished. He had initially thought that it would be an easy feat to deal with this fellow. He hadn't expected

for his opponent to be able to withstand his Sacred Venom Jade Art. Furthermore, he had sensed that the pure Qi of Heaven and Earth his opponent had was a power that could go against all evil. It was fortunate that his Sacred Venom Jade Art wasn't something ordinarily evil and poison could deal with. However, a large part of it was still being pushed back.

AST 932 – 12 Heavenly Meridians, The Primordial Flame Whip ‘Breaking’ Jade Jiao

Gu Wu stared at Qing Shui standing adjacent to him, while rising above the sky with both hands emitting streams of black colored Qi that quickly transformed into two 30 meter long black pythons. The pythons shot out their pitch-black tongues as they slithered menacingly, terrorizing the hearts of the crowd with their wicked demeanor.

Qing Shui’s expression changed for the first time since the beginning of the disturbance. Clearly, he had underestimated this man. So without a second to spare, he conjured a five meter long Primordial Flame on his hands and slowly condensed the flame into two Primordial Flame Balls.

This battle had no mercy for carelessness whatsoever. He initially wanted to use the Heart Toxin Talisman against Gu Wu, but felt it unsuitable at a time like this. These thoughts were quickly discarded, leaving him the choice to use it when he really needed to.

Qing Shui did so because he had a feeling that the man might have some kind of treasure in his possession. The Ten Thousand Great Thunderbolt Qing Shui had unleashed had been blocked completely and he was also unsure whether this man could block the same attack for the subsequent times. This was indeed troublesome, especially when the man had two black pythons slithering from both of his hands right now.

The pythons weren’t just poisonous by Qing Shui’s speculation,

because they were not real to begin with. Certainly, the surreal pythons had a terrifying level of agility and ferocity and it might be impossible to defend against beings of such power. Before that should happen, Qing Shui decided to stall for as much time as possible and use his killer move to strike them down.

Twin Dragon Pearls!

Qing Shui immediately formed two Primordial Flame Balls in his hands. His spiritual energy and spiritual sense as well as his power had undergone a slight change, achieving a small success stage especially after he had decided to stay with Mu Qing. Suddenly, he realized what had exactly changed inside him.

Twelve Heavenly Meridians!

The four channels had been cleared among the Twelve Heavenly Meridians. Indeed, human bodies were one of the greatest mysteries in the world. Besides the normal channels, there were other channels hidden deep within the human body. In spite of that, the hidden channels were considered to be quite strong and only a handful of people in the world could clear these particular channels successfully.

Qing Shui was able to realize the hidden channels within a human body from the moment the four channels had been cleared, thus granting him a characteristic change in his spiritual ability. The pearl from the Niwan Palace had become twice as big, almost like the size of a small marble. The Yin-Yang Image had experienced a change as well.

However, unlike the spiritual ability, his powers did not receive an impressive change after a tremendous breakthrough. Ten stars of strength was quite powerful and substantial, but more rigid. Despite this, it wasn't all that bad. He could always refine his powers, much like the process of tempering a weapon or armor.

With four channels cleared, Qing Shui seemed to have realized something different about himself. His spiritual ability had reaped most of the benefits from this breakthrough. Still, he felt odd having thoughts like this during a battle with a ferocious opponent like Gu Wu.

All of that happened within an instant. Qing Shui watched on as the flame balls shrouded with ferocious streaks of dark silhouetted energy flew towards the unfazed man from the Poison Mountain Stockade.

Gu Wu was cautious as well, as he simultaneously released the 'black pythons' in his hands towards the incoming Primordial Flame Balls without hesitation. The pythons sprang across the flames while they hissed, baring their fangs in a lifelike motion.

Hiss hiss!

Bang bang!

The high-pitched hisses were followed by the dull sounds of collision, which simultaneously created an explosion in the air, filling the empty space with thick smoke and toxic gas.

“Young man, you are very strong. Unfortunately, you are against me and I don’t have time to play with you any longer. Saintly Venomous Jade Jiao, arise!”

Gu Wu rushed towards Qing Shui while flashing a wicked smile that could send shivers down his spine. After that, he shouted in a roaring tone that echoed throughout the sky.

A gleam of light the color of jade flashed from his body when he uttered the last word. Both of his hands erupted in a dense jade-like aura, which simultaneously extended to about 30 meters long.

Roar roar!

Two distinct roars could be heard bursting in the sky, as the elongated aura transformed into two Jade Jiao crossing each other in a circular motion. The bodies of the twin Jiao were gleaming in a brilliant luster of jade, which was exquisite and beautiful to look at. However, Qing Shui’s spiritual sense was telling him that the jade-colored Jiao was at least ten times more toxic than the previous ‘black pythons’.

Nevertheless, he had already prepared a Heart Toxin Talisman on his hand to throw at Gu Wu!

There was nothing else to think of right now. All he had to do was to kill this man, because if Gu Wu was left breathing after this fight, Qing Shui would be the one to die today. Of all places, Qing Shui didn’t expect that there would be such a freak like him within

the Poison Mountain Stockade.

The Heart Toxin Talisman of absolute accuracy was torn apart yet again when the distance from the opponent was getting close. Qing Shui released another Heart Toxin Talisman towards Gu Wu without the intention of giving up.

Roar roar!

Just then, Gu Wu shook both of his hands, followed by two giant Jade Jiao letting out two thundering roars before they leaped towards Qing Shui. As they opened their ferocious jaws to let out a piercing cry, a blazing stench of 'jade aura' was subsequently released to the air.

The jade colored aura was sparkling brilliantly like a lustrous jade, but was swept across the sky at an accelerated rate. The jade aura seemed like a streak of icy flames shrouded with a hint of ghastly radiance that gave Qing Shui a brief fright.

His spiritual sense could now detect the menacing threat of the jade aura clearly and distinctively.

Fiery Golden Eyes!

As soon as he used the weakening technique on Gu Wu, a stream of ripples appeared around his body, indicating the ineffectiveness the technique against him. Qing Shui was clearly shocked and worst of all, he was unhappy about it!

Emperor's Qi!

This time, there were no ripples to be seen. The domineering Emperor's Qi has the ability to ignore the opponent's strength and defenses!

The domineering Emperor's Qi did not let Qing Shui down. 20% debuff was a terrifying reduction, because the weakening ability had affected all aspects of his opponent's power!

With that, the imposing forces of the twin Jade Jiao were immediately reduced. And at the same time, Qing Shui shot two Primordial Fire Balls, which had hit the Jade Jiao, but did not burn them to crisps.

Despite being unable to burn them, he was able to melt one of the heads successfully. However, in a mere few seconds, the head was regenerated, as if they hadn't been hurt in the first place. The twin Jade Jiao assumed their demeanor and rush towards Qing Shui in a quick motion.

Coagulating the Primordial Flames required time. However, time was not a privilege he was given by his opponents.

Feeling annoyed, he shot out two 10,000 Years Frosted Iron Balls immediately, which were promptly blocked by the twin Jade Jiao. Even though the Jade Jiao had turned darker in color, they were able to recover quickly, reverting the darker color to its original color.

In any case, Qing Shui didn't want the Jade Jiao anywhere near him. His spiritual sense was telling him that the poisonous beings were extremely dangerous and he didn't want to risk himself to find out. So with a flash of his silhouette, he transversed behind Gu Wu and shot a 10,000 Years Coldsteel Needle at his head.

With the Roc Spreading Wings at its large success stage, Qing Shui was able to nab the advantage of speed with his Nine Palace Steps. However, his opponent had an inborn poisonous physique, as well as two poisonous Jade Jiao akin to two ferocious giant pythons. The Jade Jiao were perhaps even stronger than the giant pythons – they were untouchable.....

Ding!

Blocked once again, Qing Shui finally realized his opponent might have something valuable up his sleeves. Or perhaps he had a technique that resembled Qing Shui's 'Divinity Protection' and that would certainly have a cooldown time as well.

Even so, Qing Shui's opponent was visibly frightened. The twin Jade Jiao flew in a circle around Gu Wu, placing him in the middle. After that, the twin Jade Jiao rushed towards Qing Shui in a flash.

“He's scared!”

Qing Shui had a feeling that the 10,000 Years Coldsteel Needles might be at their limit. If these Coldsteel Needles had a bit more prowess in them, perhaps the battle would have ended earlier than

this.....

He could only use his Nine Palace Steps to run away. He felt a bit annoyed seeing how his opponent was able to control the twin Jade Jiao efficiently. What he didn't expect either was the fact that Gu Wu had mastered the Transformation Technique as well!

Of course, the Transformation Technique!

The user of this technique would be able to combine his Qi of Xiantian to form a powerful demonic beast to participate in the battle, just like how Gu Wu had called forth the Jade Jiao. The Transformation Technique was known to be powerful as it was a technique exclusively for those who had reached the level of a Martial Emperor. Moreover, it was rumored to be a technique of a legendary level as well.

He was also wondering whether the Nine Animals Mimicry Technique that he had cultivated would be able to transform.....

There was no time to lose. He figured that he must stall for more time, but stalling might be a bit risky for now.

With another Nine Palace Steps, he evaded the incoming attack of the twin Jade Jiao in a flash.

The slithering of the giant Jade Jiao was as fast as lightning, as well as flexible in its movement. If Qing Shui didn't have the Nine Palace Steps in the first place, he would have been wounded the

moment the Jade Jiao unleashed an assault. Gu Wu was a man to be feared and the Mu Clan would not even stand a chance against him at this point.

Even if Gu Wu were to be attacked from all sides, the members of the Mu Clan would never stand a chance. The twin Jade Jiao might seem beautiful from their gleaming appearance, but the humongous beasts were nevertheless poisonous to touch.

The Primordial Flames were now about a foot thick, spreading across the battlefield at about 5 meters in length. When he was still in the middle of coagulating his flames, he could see the roaring Jade Jiao swirling towards his direction from the corner of his eyes.....

Qing Shui could now use the Primordial Flames with superb efficiency – one of the changes brought about from his breakthrough. Since he could conjure the flames quite efficiently, a daring thought then popped up in his mind.

He retreated abruptly and quickly pulled his flames apart, extending its length to about 20 meters long.....

The thickness of the flame was about the size of a thumb. Even though the whips were long, Qing Shui also noticed that the strength of the whip was in correlation to his powers. He was overwhelmed with a sudden surprise, clearly excited to unleash the force of the flames once more.

The ‘Primordial Flame Whip’ about 30 meters long oscillated

across the battlefield in a nimble motion, breaking one of the Jiao's heads in a successful strike.....

Hiss hiss.....

The giant head that had been whipped had turned into an obscure image, as if it was going to disappear at any second.

Haha.....

Qing Shui burst into laughter, as he began to move his hands, making the flame whips seem increasingly nimble, as if they were two lifelike snake whips. With that, he continued to strike the whips against the bodies of the twin Jade Jiao relentlessly.

The pace of his strikes was agile, unlike before when he had prioritized the force of the attack more than the whip's agility. Even though he was able to destroy their heads successfully or destroy one-third of the Jade Jiao, his opponents would regenerate in an instant. The conjuring of his Primordial Flame Balls required a bit more time to form, thus it was unable to keep up with the pace of the Jiao's regeneration rate.

Now that he had the whips, he was able to match up against the regenerative ability of the twin Jade Jiao. The power of the 'Primordial Flame Whips' was able to block against the assault of the Jiao as well, becoming nimbler by the minute. He hadn't needed to evade anymore and he was able to stay on his ground while forcing the twin Jade Jiao to retreat from his attacks.

“So the Primordial Flames can be used this way, rather than shooting them as flame balls.” Qing Shui was elated by his new discovery.

The crowd was stunned as they would never have imagined the battle to go on to such an extent. Most of them were beginning to feel concern about Qing Shui because Gu Wu was an extraordinary cultivator honed in the Poison Mountain Stockade. The strongest one in the Poison Mountain Stockade wasn't one of the old fools from before, but this man pitting himself against Qing Shui in the field.

Crack crack!

Hiss hiss!

The Primordial Flame Whip was able to crack open the heads of the twin Jade Jiao and Qing Shui continued to lash the whip as much as he could to defend against the soaring beasts. As the time passed by, the 'toxic gas' inside Gu Wu's body was starting to run low.

Meanwhile, Qing Shui's golden pellet in his Dantian circulated very quickly, with an enormous amount of energy flowing to his limbs and bones continuously. The Yin-Yang Image was also circulating at a fast speed as well, one could tell with their naked eyes that he was swiftly being replenished with an abundance of Qi. Although the output rate of his Qi was comparatively higher than the replenishing rate, the replenished amount was able to make up to the rate of his loss.

The twin Jade Jiao had become shorter in length, which made Qing Shui increasingly uneasy. With another Heart Toxin Talisman flung across his opponent, the twin Jade Jiao simultaneously extended towards Qing Shui in an abrupt movement, stretching to one-third longer than that of their best forms. The speed of the twin Jade Jiao was as fast as the hisses of their tongues.

Qing Shui quickly retreated as he lashed the Primordial Fire Whip at the Jade Jiao to block their attack.

He evaded it, but or to better put it, he countered the Jade Jiao with his Nine Palace steps, causing the twin Jade Jiao to soar upwards abruptly before backing off in a hurry. At the same time, the Heart Toxin Talisman had successfully hit his opponent, staggering Gu Wu an instant before he started acting in a frenzy from the psychological attack.

The Heart Toxin Talisman had allowed Qing Shui to witness its peerless power....

And in that window of time, Qing Shui struck the Primordial Flame Whip against Gu Wu's head without hesitation!

AST 933 – The Fall Of Gu Wu, Encouragement, The Participation Of The Silken Web Ridge

Before that, Qing Shui could feel a subtle green aura seeping into his body. The aura was leaked from the Jade Jiao when it had ascended to the sky abruptly. In the end, he didn't really dodge their attacks at all...

Gu Wu was dead after he was struck on the head by Qing Shui's Primordial Flame Whips, splitting his brain apart in an instant. Overwhelmed with a sense of relief, Qing Shui watched as Gu Wu fell straight to the ground from the sky. The Heart Toxin Talisman was nonetheless invincible – psychological offense would always be the best tactic in a battle.

Unless the person affected had a heart of a stone or was a kindhearted person of righteousness who would not be tempted by corrupt thoughts, the Heart Toxin Talisman would immediately attack the psychological mind without a doubt.

However, Qing Shui still wasn't sure what kind of effect the Heart Toxin Talisman would inflict against those with weaker cultivation and power. But if the talisman was used against an early Martial Emperor, he or she would be greatly affected, causing their minds to be susceptible to psychological attacks. In any case, Qing Shui was satisfied as long as his opponents were affected by the talisman.

Thump!

Gu Wu's corpse landed on the grounds of the arena with a loud but dull thump. The body of a Martial Emperor had been strengthened to become as sturdy as solid steel, which explained why his bones and limbs weren't shattered when he fell from a high altitude.

Qing Shui then slowly descended to the arena. There was a great benefit in battling this man from the Poison Mountain Stockade and that was the discovery of the 'Primordial Flame Whips' attack. The whip attack was not only convenient and fast, but also nimble due to the sentient characteristic of the Primordial Flames. With time, the Primordial Flames would be able to achieve the ability to transform into something much greater.....

When he was presented with the possibility of transformation, he became excited by the idea of the Primordial Flames transforming into a demonic beast, which he surmised to be extremely powerful and intimidating. A skill that could transform would at least be considered a skill of legendary level. In spite of that, not all legendary skills have the ability to transform.

The crowd below the arena were stunned by the outcome. No one said a word, filling the atmosphere with a moment of eerie silence. However, they were relieved that it was Gu Wu who had fallen, because nothing bad would happen if the Mu Clan emerged victorious. But if it was the other way around, no one would be able to stop Gu Wu from spreading death throughout these lands.

Even if Qing Shui were to be defeated and the Godly Sword Clan was to intervene in the fight with Gu Wu, a bloody war would

break out with no way to tell who would win and who would lose. The innocent bystanders would be desecrated as well.

Now that Qing Shui had won, their peace would be secured. If the Poison Mountain Stockade were any wiser, they would not stir up trouble anymore. Should they decide to ignore their wisdom and ruffle Qing Shui's feathers in the future, the annihilation of their sect would become a reality, rather than a fictional fantasy.

Qing Shui folded his fists and bowed to the crowd surrounding the arena. Then he looked towards the members of the Poison Mountain Stockade and said: "Seniors of the Poison Mountain Stockade, are there any more words you wish to speak to us?"

"No more!" After a brief moment, the old leader of the Poison Mountain Stockade spat out two words unwillingly and arduously.

"Today is an auspicious day for Mu Qing and I. Thank you for the 'entertainment' you had gifted to us. I hope there will be no more cases of such amusement. A man as wise as you should never do such shocking things from now on. I don't wish to see the Mu Clan getting hurt. Should they be hurt, I will repay their sufferings 100 times more to the assailant, regardless of who they are. Whether they are from a large sect or an aristocratic clan, it doesn't matter – more of them are being annihilated everyday." After giving his final speech, Qing Shui turned away and slowly descended from the arena.

The members of the Poison Mountain Stockade went up the arena and collected Gu Wu's corpse. Meanwhile, the old man turned to the crowd while cupping his hands and said: "The Poison

Mountain Stockade has further matters to attend to, so we will take our leave now. Farewell!”

Such behavior wasn’t strange, after all, they had lost their face completely, so staying any longer would be pointless. Losing Gu Song and Gu Wu had cost them dearly, leaving them with two options to choose in this situation.

One, either continue to fight with Qing Shui or two, swallow their pride and leave quietly without ever retaliating. The latter would be possible if Qing Shui and Mu Clan could show how strong they would be in the future. If they managed to soar to a high position, then the Poison Mountain Stockade could only remain silent for the sake of their survival.

But if it was otherwise and the Poison Mountain Stockade gained a high position instead, they would definitely come back and settle their score with Qing Shui, crushing the Mu Clan in the process.

If Qing Shui could let them leave quietly, then he must have the confidence to brush them off should they retaliate once more. Letting them go served as an encouragement to the Mu Clan and himself. The Poison Mountain Stockade could be seen as a poisonous wolf that would devour them anytime. They would always need to be cautious of their surroundings and they had to be diligent in their cultivation. If they were able to do all of the above, then the poisonous wolf would eventually become as insignificant as a tiny ant.

After all, a tiny ant would definitely have a hard time rising up to the top again.

The wedding ceremony continued as normal, but progressed at a hasty speed instead. Around mid-afternoon, most of the guests had left, leaving only the members of the Godly Sword Clan, Dong Clan and Sun Clan, as well as the Silken Web Ridge.

These members were welcomed into the large hall of the Mu Clan, this time for the banquet that only close friends and family were allowed to join. After watching Qing Shui's performance today, they knew what they should do next – form an alliance with one another.

The Silken Web Ridge were made to stay by Qing Shui, which the others had acknowledged. Everyone knew there was something mysterious between Qing Shui and the leader of the Silken Web Ridge, but no one said anything about it. Both of them didn't have any particular interaction that could arouse their suspicion. In any case, the members of the Mu Clan were already informed about the existence of Qing Shui's other wives and they were not really surprised. After all, most of them had a number of wives themselves too.

They knew Qing Shui would become a man of utmost importance in the future, so no one in the family expected Mu Qing to be his only wife. The members of the Mu Clan were already quite old and with that came the experience and wisdom to judge things with clarity. Whatever Qing Shui had set his mind to do, they decided that they would not interfere with his decision.

Mu Qing sat on Qing Shui's left side, while Yu He sat on his right, which she invited herself to do so. Qing Shui took the opportunity

to ask Yu He why she had come to the Eastern Victory Divine Continent and she gave him a simple explanation before ending the conversation.

After that, the Mu Clan, Godly Sword Clan, as well as the Dong Clan and Sun Clan requested to form an alliance once again. The key member would of course be Qing Shui himself. At the same time, Yu He was also requesting to join the alliance, which Qing Shui was more than happy to welcome her into.

He was also pleased to know that the Silken Web Ridge would be joining the alliance as well. Should anything happen in the future, things could be settled without much resistance.

And so, the banquet lasted until late at night. Mu Qing and Yu He left first, so that Mu Qing could show Yu He her room. Before Yu He left, she had a depressed expression on her face, but she only revealed it when she had her back turned from everyone else. Tonight was Qing Shui and Mu Qing's wedding night, after all.

The members of the Godly Sword Clan, Dong Clan and Sun Clan were also staying in the Mu Residence for the night before leaving tomorrow morning. Qing Shui knew he wouldn't be able to enter the Realm of the Violet Jade Immortal tonight, so he had already used up his time for today in the morning just before dawn.

Their newlywed room was Mu Qing's building that she had designed herself. The decorations inside the rooms were elegant and not a shred of girly items could be seen inside. The elegant air of the room had given the entire place a sense of nobility. The bed was covered in a golden satin blanket embroidered with the golden

luan and phoenix design to signify their status as husband and wife. Beside Qing Shui stood his wife wearing a golden phoenix dress, as he glanced at her lovingly.

Mu Qing was shy and bashful when she noticed the loving look in his eyes. The subtle curve at the corner of her lips was too seductive and with such display from an elegant and intellectual woman like her, Qing Shui couldn't resist the temptation to conquer her entire body for himself.

He scooped her up from her feet and placed her on the bedsheet. The softness of the bed and the loving woman in his arms made him growl in passion, filling the room with a layer of romantic air that would linger until dawn...

.....

Yu He stood in front of the bedroom window watching the lights pouring in from the festival lights. The whole area was still brimming with the atmosphere of new year, so she might have to stay for a few days before she could go back home. Besides, the Mu Clan was still in celebration of two happy events, making it worse to go away now. Even though the sky had turned dark, laughs and giggles could be heard from some of the rooms in the Mu Residence.

When the image of Qing Shui and the eldest daughter of Mu Clan making passionate love flashed through her mind, she felt a painful throb in her heart. She came all the way for him, but she realized the past feelings between the two of them had already faded away. It has been a long time since they had seen each other.

She was afraid of losing what they had before. All of her efforts were because of him and she was prepared to give herself to him. She only had Qing Shui in her heart and nobody else could replace him anymore.

She had never thought of marrying someone other than Qing Shui. If they could not be together, then she would rather be alone for the rest of her life. All the years of effort were for her to catch up to his footsteps, so that she would not be a burden to him...

Looking at the illuminated window in the building far away, she recognized that room as the bridal chamber for Qing Shui and Mu Qing. Yu He had a yearning expression on her face. One day, she might be able to become a bride to someone who would love her unconditionally.

During the day, she noticed his gaze when he saw her. There was a hint of pleasant surprise and sincerity in his eyes, but they were completely different compared to his eyes back then at the Hundred Miles City. He was already a man of high position and there was no need for him to take advantage of her like before...

The next day, Qing Shui woke up late yet again, an unusual occurrence for a man who prioritizes morning training. Last night was his wedding night, so he decided to cut himself some slack. When he and Mu Qing finally woke up, they went back into having sex again. After they were done, the sky was already bright, illuminating the room with a subtle daylight from the outside.

The daylight in the winter was late as usual.

“Qing Shui, I am officially your wife now,” Mu Qing said with a chirpy mood.

“You have been my wife even before the banquet. You will still be my wife even without the formalities and the ceremony.” Qing Shui embraced Mu Qing while he spoke with a grin.

“It’s weird, you know. Fate is a curious thing. You are from the Greencloud Continent and I am from the Eastern Victory Divine Continent. The distance between us is millions and billions li away, yet we were able to meet each other and walk down this path.” Mu Qing stared at Qing Shui with her beautiful eyes, as she pondered their destiny to become one with each other.

“And that’s why I said our marriage is a gift graced by the heavens. You are destined to be with me,” Qing Shui chuckled.

“Qing Shui, does Sister Yu like you?” Mu Qing asked with a smile, suddenly changing the topic to something else.

The sudden question caught Qing Shui by surprise, but he managed to maintain his smile and said: “Are you jealous?”

“I am serious. The woman came all the way here to find you, don’t you feel anything for her?” Mu Qing scoffed.

“She came here to find me?” Qing Shui was confused as he looked

back at Mu Qing.

“She didn’t exactly say that but I know she was talking about you. All the effort she had put on herself was because of you and that she wanted to match up to you. I don’t know what happened between you and her to make her change to the way she is, but did you abandon her long time ago?” Mu Qing blinked profusely, clearly curious about their past.

Slap!

After being stunned by her question, he quickly slapped her butt and said: “What nonsense are you talking about, we haven’t seen each other for many years, that’s all.”

Mu Qing blushed as she squinted her eyes at Qing Shui, but then quickly reverted to her cheerful self and said: “You know, you can actually marry sister Yu if you want to.”

Mu Qing’s words shocked Qing Shui thoroughly. It would be normal if Huoyun Liu-Li had spoken those words instead, but coming from a refined woman like Mu Qing was a bit unexpected. He could only remain silent as he looked at her with a smile curled at the corner of his mouth.

“Don’t look at me like that. I just think Sister Yu has endured enough hardship as it is,” Mu Qing said with an embarrassed expression on her face.

“Silly woman, are you willing to share your man with someone else just like that?” Qing Shui was entertained by his wife for being naive in matters of romance and relationships.

“I’m not willing to share my husband with anyone else. How should I know that a woman like her would have feelings for a blockhead like you.....”

Qing Shui was utterly silenced by his wife in an instant!

The Godly Sword Clan, Dong Clan and Sun Clan had already left in the morning. However, Dong Yan and Sun Yan stayed behind because they knew Qing Shui would be leaving in a few days. By then, they would be able to send him off personally as his sworn brothers.

Behind the courtyard, Qing Shui and Yu He sat opposite to each other around the table in a pavilion.

Yu He smiled while staring at Qing Shui the whole time they were sitting down.

“Sister Yu, even though we haven’t seen each other in a long time, you don’t have to stare at me like that!” said Qing Shui as he looked at the elegant woman in front of him.

“You really have grown much more mature, in fact. You and Mu Qing are made for each other.”

AST 934 – Benefactor, Seventh Grade Of Nature Energy

“You have grown. You are now more mature. You and Mu Qing are a good match.”

Qing Shui looked at Yu He who was in front of him. Although her tone was very dull, he could still feel some hidden bitterness in her voice. It was especially clear to him, causing him to not know what to do.

“Elder Sister Yu, you are more mature than you were before and even prettier,” Qing Shui smiled. After not meeting her for a long time, he had an odd feeling that he was not able to describe.

“Mature already, is Elder Sister Yu old now? Even I suspect that I am old already,” Yu He drank tea and chatted with Qing Shui casually.

“How can that be? Elder Sister Yu is an absolute beauty. Every man who sees you will be tempted. I just wonder which man would have that kind of fortune.” Qing Shui looked at Yu He in a regretful manner.

Women can be scarier than men at times. When he spoke to Mu Qing previously, Qing Shui felt that he had caused her to change. He had never expected that this would happen....

“Then do you wish to be the fortunate one?” Yu He looked at

Qing Shui and smiled.

Qing Shui saw that there were no fluctuations in Yu He's eyes. Her smile was also very calm, even now, they seemed like good friends joking with each other. However, he knew that she was not joking.

“I do wish to be that person, but it is not something that I can have just by wanting it. That's right? Elder Sister Yu, you still have not told me how have you been for the past few years.” Qing Shui laughed out loud and quickly changed the topic.

He felt that he was too serious earlier. If she pressed further, he would not know what to do. Furthermore, so many years had gone by, people change.

Yu He naturally could tell what Qing Shui was doing. Even if she wanted to press this topic, now was not the time. Qing Shui had just celebrated his big night. She would not say anything now. Furthermore, it had already been so many years.

Following that, Yu He told him of the things that happened to Hundred Flowers Valley. Of course there were many details that were skipped past. She had only given him a brief summary. However, she did not hide the fact that Hundred Flowers Valley had footholds in five continents.

Hearing Yu He's words, Qing Shui smiled, “Elder Sister Yu met with your benefactor, resulting in a meteoric rise.”

“In my heart, there is still another important benefactor.” Yu He looked at Qing Shui and laughed loudly.

“Oh, just meeting one benefactor is sufficient to change one’s life. In that case, congratulations to Elder Sister Yu.” Qing Shui smiled, as he poured more tea for her.

Yu He smiled and did not say anymore. She knew that Qing Shui understood what she meant. He just did not want to bring up this topic. This caused her to be happy and sad at the same time.

“What about you? How have you been all these years? Why are you here in Eastern Victory Divine Continent?” Yu He was very curious.

Qing Shui had too many things that happened to him, it was not possible to finish speaking of it within an hour and a half. Yu He actually already knew of many of Qing Shui’s deeds. After all, Qing Shui was very well known in the Greencloud Continent.

When she heard of Qing Shui’s matters, she felt a sour feeling in her heart. He had been struggling alone, unlike herself. In comparison, she had risen to her position very smoothly. Her master was her benefactor. However, without Qing Shui, she would not have been able to wait until her master appeared. Furthermore, it was Qing Shui that had changed her entire life.

“Are you going to go back soon?” after a long period of time, Yu He looked towards the sky and smiled.

“It should be somewhere between the day after tomorrow to a week. I have not been home for two years already.” Qing Shui missed his home and wanted to go back as soon as he could.

“I came here in order to deliver something, I wish to go back too. Shall we go back together?” Yu He smiled at Qing Shui.”

“Of course, however, what will happen to Silken Web Ridge after you leave?” Qing Shui was puzzled. He was now sure something was going on.

“Silken Web Ridge already had someone managing it before I came. Furthermore, I am just here to deliver something. This place will still be managed by the original person. The relationship with the Mu Clan will not change, they are good friends of the Mu Clan.” Yu He put on a shallow smile, she seemed to be very happy.

“Then stay in the Mu Clan for two days. When I leave, I’ll let you know and we can go together.”

“I still have some things to do. When it is time to leave, I will come and meet up with you.”

“Alright then, I’ll send you off!”

“Mn!”

.....

In the morning, Qing Shui entered into the Realm of the Violet Jade Immortal. Even though they were celebrating, they did not stop practicing. Now was a period of high speed growth. They knew that Qing Shui would be leaving soon. Thus, they were working very hard. The problems that they had would be resolved.

After entering the Realm of the Violet Jade Immortal , Qing Shui started to look into himself. There was a jade-green aura that was pushed into a corner by the Nature Energy. However, it wasn't able to be dissolved in this short period of time.

This was just a very small portion that had entered his body. Back then, he had not completely avoided it and some of it had entered his body. It was a good thing that the Nature Energy in his body was strong. It was able to suppress that jade-green aura. That poison aura wanted to enter his Dantian but was forced back by the Emperor's Qi...

Now, it was nested in a corner. This caused Qing Shui to feel very unsettled. It was like a bomb hidden in his body. He had to force it out as soon as possible. Leaving it in his body would cause Qing Shui to feel very unsettled. It may be fine now but he was afraid that when he was in a battle and was not able to pay attention to it, it might take advantage of the opening and explode out. It might even cause his death.

Thus, Qing Shui wanted to see what methods he had to force out this poison aura now.

He sat down cross legged and started to circulate the Ancient Strengthening Technique. Combining it with the Nature Energy, it headed to that jade-green aura. As it pushed it, the speed of circulation increased.

That jade-green aura seemed to have spirituality. It tried to escape in the meridians. This was a very frightening thing. The meridians were like a spider web, there were many branches to them. If the poison aura escaped, there would be no way to find it in his meridians. He was able to suppress it earlier because the distance and location were at a good spot. After he forced it to a corner near the Dantian, he had not dared to force it too much.

Now, he circulated his Qi and used a great force to fiercely push on it. The poison aura took advantage and tried to flee. This aura was very mysterious, causing Qing Shui to be extremely frustrated. It was as slippery as a loach, when he managed to dissipate a small amount, it would quickly run away. However, when it was far away, it would not move.

Dissipating some was still progress. However, the amount that was dissipated caused Qing Shui to feel depressed. At this rate, he would require a very long time. Feeling the slipperiness of this poison aura, Qing Shui was very determined to force it out as soon as he could.

This carried on for another hour. In this period, he managed to dissipate some of it twice. If only he could catch it anytime he wanted, Qing Shui felt that he would be able to finish this within a day.

With the current situation, it caused one to be driven mad. However, Qing Shui was prepared. He took out a brocade box filled with Gold Needles that were as thin as cow's fur.

Originally, he wanted to test out the strength of his Nature Energy. However, he discovered that the jade-green aura was very strong as well. He could only use the the Gold Needles to assist.

The Nature Energy was chasing it within his body. Qing Shui was watching the insides of his body. Every time it was in a meridian, he would suddenly jab the needle down, causing the poison aura to be trapped.

Following behind was the Nature Energy.

Qing Shui's Gold Needles had blocked up the path of the poison aura, naturally the Nature Energy's path was blocked as well. Thus, this was only an aid. However, with this method, Qing Shui felt a lot more relaxed.

Following the passage of time, there was an increasing number of Gold Needles in Qing Shui's body. The poison aura in his body was getting smaller and smaller. He slowly started to relax. Without this Gold Needles, he did not know how long would it take to completely dissipate this poison aura.

Very soon, one third of the aura was cleared out. The Nature Energy continued to dissipate the poison aura. Every time it dissipated some of it, there seemed to be some minute changes to the Nature Energy.

The Sixth Grade Nature Energy was already at the great perfection stage long ago. It had not broken through yet. Qing Shui felt that it was like a tightly wrapped cocoon, there was no way to break through it. However, now, he found that there seemed to be some tears on the cocoon. This caused Qing Shui to be very excited.

Could the Nature Energy be able to make a breakthrough?

Although the Nature Energy was not his strongest supplementary technique, it allowed Qing Shui to withstand the pressure that was many times more than Qing Shui's own abilities. It was able to withstand poison and enticement. Any techniques that walked the path of evil would be suppressed by the Nature Energy. The Seventh Grade of Nature Energy should be a threshold. He felt that the Seventh Grade of Nature Energy would be very strong.

He originally intended to take a break before continuing. Feeling this miraculous change, he decided to speed up instead. After dissipating some of the escaping poison aura, before Qing Shui could do anything, he discovered that the Nature Energy started twisting in his meridians.

The swelling of his meridians felt very intense, his inner vision discovered it was moving like a snake, moving at an increasing speed. Qing Shui felt very excited and pulled out all the Golden Needles.

The Nature Energy in his body grew even stronger and it wound

back to the Dantian. Once it returned to the Dantian, the Emperor's Qi circulated automatically for the first time. The two tyrannical Qi clashed against each other.

The purple Emperor's Qi and the Nature Energy intertwined with each other and circled the Dantian. The speed of the Jindan's rotation was increasing, spreading the Qi of the Ancient Strengthening Technique outwards.

Pu!

In about seven and a half minutes, there was a dull sound. The Emperor's Qi returned to the Dantian and stayed at a spot. In the middle was the golden Jindan. The Qi of the Mental State akin to that of immovable mountains was on the other side. The Nature Energy also occupied a side. They were all revolving around the Jindan.

The Nature Energy seemed a lot denser than before. It was also much larger. Qing Shui knew that the Nature Energy had broken through.

Seventh Grade Nature Energy.

Increase in grade!

Qing Shui still felt like he was a little confused. He activated the Nature Energy and a surging strength arose. It felt much stronger when compared to before its breakthrough. It felt like his spirit

was strengthened. There was a strong aura of self confidence.

The mysterious Nature Energy indeed had some changes at the Seventh Grade, Although it only increased 70% of his abilities, that self confidence, ability to resist poison and pressure had increased by many times. Furthermore, he felt that his ability to resist spirit energy also had a great change.

“Let’s see where you are going to hide this time!”

Qing Shui activated the Nature Energy and increased the circulation speed of the Nature Energy by many times. He caused it to chase after that jade-green aura. This time, he rushed directly at it, without using the Golden Needles.

AST 935 – Roc’s Might, Departure, Ancient Legends

That emerald colored poison Qi seemed to have sensed how terrifying the Nature Energy was, but the Nature Energy which had been through a breakthrough wasn’t something that could be compared with what it was previously. In the past, it was like a small stream, but right now it was like a great river. The Nature Energy caught up very quickly and like a big fish devouring a small one, swallowed up that emerald colored poison Qi.

The remaining half of the emerald poison Qi couldn’t even do anything and was dissolved. The difference of the Nature Energy before and after it had leveled up was too great. A Grade Seven Nature Energy was much more powerful than the Grade Six Nature Energy.

After repeated checks to make sure that the emerald colored poison Qi had already disappeared, Qing Shui was now relieved. He then started to sense the Nature Energy which had leveled up, which gave it a stronger air of oppression.

Oppressing with aura!

Qing Shui tried to bring up his Qi, gathering up all his aura together through the Nature Energy. It was only after it had reached the Niwan Palace and mixed with his spirit energy before they started to surge out.

“Mmm, very powerful!” Qing Shui sensed the changes to the

aura, but kept having a feeling that something was wrong. It wasn't a smooth feeling and just felt like many things put together randomly.

It might be because this was the first time he was using it!

Qing Shui then made a few more attempts and his mastery increased. Oppressing with aura, using Nature Energy to draw out the Qi of Heaven and Earth, allowing his aura to borrow the help of Heaven and Earth to oppress the opponent.

This was the ability that only the Grade Seven Nature Energy had.

Once the opponent's aura was suppressed, his Qi's activity would be suppressed and his abilities would suffer a huge setback. What was most commonly seen was powerful martial arts cultivators suppressing low level ones. Spiritual Confinement was also, in a way, using pressure to oppress the opponent. When the pressure reached a certain limit, one could use aura alone to kill the opponent.

It could be used for confinement and could cause the opponent to lose the motivation to continue the battle.

What Qing Shui needed to cultivate right now was the "Roc's Might", using Nature Energy to guide the powerful spirit energy to act as a foundation, applying pressure and oppressing opponents who were of the same level or even higher.

Gradually, he became more and more familiar with the mastery. Now, he had the means of using the “Roc’s Might”. This was a battle technique from the Roc form which had appeared after Qing Shui attained a breakthrough to the Martial Emperor level. It was only after the Nature Energy had attained a breakthrough to the Seventh Grade that Qing Shui felt that he was able to cultivate it.

Soaring vertically upward 90,000 li into the skies ... The legendary roc was said to be able to travel 90,000 li each time it flapped its wings. The normal flying speed of the roc was comparable to Qing Shui’s Nine Continents Steps before it had leveled up.

Wherever Qing Shui’s eyes focused, there would be a wave which appeared to be like a spatial ripple. This was pressure, something which ordinary people wouldn’t be able to see. It was the movement of spirit energy and had a similar effect as the Heart Toxin Talisman, but yet they weren’t completely the same.

His grasp of the skill got better and better. The Roc’s Might was best used against people with weak spirit energy, willpower and minds. However, no matter if one was strong or not, they would be affected.

Unknowingly, he had already spent half the time he could remain in the Realm of the Violet Jade Immortal. He could be considered to be able to use the Roc’s Might now. However, he would still need some time before he could get it to the Small Success Stage. Such pressure wouldn’t be able to increase his abilities and it would only be a feeling. As for how much it could weaken his opponents, it would also be dependent on how strong

the opponent was.

Tempering!

The Soulshake Bell had reached quite a high grade and was on the verge of attaining a breakthrough for quite a while, yet he had not been able to succeed. However, Qing Shui didn't let it get to him and only persisted with the daily tempering. As for whether he'd attain a breakthrough or not, he didn't think too much about it.

The Spirit Channeling Jade had attained a breakthrough from the first grade to the third, reaching the Intuition Realm. This was quite a great breakthrough. The advancement of the Spirit Channeling Jade was the slowest, but the great power it brought with its level up was undeniably strong.

The Spirit Gathering Lamp was still on the verge of leveling up. The advancement of these items grew increasingly slower toward the end and it was even possible for there to be no breakthrough, even after a very long period of time.

The Blackjade Poisonous Spiderweb had leveled up by one grade, reaching grade five, the Heaven's Mysteries Realm. Qing Shui saw that the realms of the various treasures were all different, but he didn't think too much into it. He only cared about which grade they were at and if it was sufficient to know that the Blackjade Poisonous Spiderweb was at grade five, one grade higher than before.

The Demon Binding Ropes had also increased by one grade, reaching grade seven. It looked two times thicker than before and its color had turned deeper. He could sense that the spiritual energy on it had grown increasingly strong. This was a good item and it was now at grade seven, the Realm of Subduing Dragons and Taming Tigers. It had caught up to the Soulshake Bell, but the latter was on the verge of leveling up to grade eight.

After attaining a breakthrough to become a Martial Emperor, Qing Shui realized that the treasures he had in the past had temporarily become pretty weak and were not effective for serious situations, unless they were put to use with careful timing. It was just like how the Blackjade Poisonous Spiderweb and the Five-Headed Demonic Spider's Corrosive Poison Web had been used together. If the Blackjade Poisonous Spiderweb was used just by itself, he had no idea if it would have any effect.

Thank goodness it had now increased by one grade. Its abilities should be greater now and it should be better able to absorb poison. After a period of time, Qing Shui would soak it in poison, allowing it to absorb the poison.

In the interim, when Qing Shui was practicing the Roc's Might, he would attempt to add in Emperor's Qi, only to find that it went against the Nature Energy and the two domineering Qis were not able to merge at all. He then dismissed the thought of attempting to merge them together.

When Qing Shui went out, it was already noon. He walked out of his room and saw that Mu Qing was sitting at the pavilion downstairs. When Qing Shui saw her, she seemed to have sensed

something and turned her head.

She broke into a light smile and her expression made Qing Shui feel as if the entire world was much brighter than before.

Qing Shui went down and sat opposite her.

“Are you hungry? Do you want to get some food?” Mu Qing looked at Qing Shui and asked, smiling.

“Eating one less meal isn’t a big deal to a cultivator. When I see you, no matter how hungry I felt, I won’t feel hungry anymore.” Qing Shui held Mu Qing’s hand over the stone table and smiled.

“The blockhead only knows how to cheer me up when he’s about to leave.” Mu Qing looked at Qing Shui, not blinking. Although she was smiling, Qing Shui could sense that she was very disappointed.

“Qing`er or do you want to follow me back?” Qing Shui gave it some thought and said.

“I’m already very satisfied to be able to meet you. Moreover, I’m already your wife and I can still go to look for you in the future. Right now, I can’t abandon the Mu Clan. Promise me, if you come to the Eastern Victory Divine Continent, you must come and look for me.” Mu Qing lowered her head. She didn’t want to let Qing Shui see her weak and fragile expression.

“You’re my wife. Even if I don’t have to come to the Eastern

Victory Divine Continent, I'll still come to look for you." Qing Shui couldn't bear to part with her either, but he still had things he had to do. In a few years...

"With these words from you, Qing'er is satisfied," Mu Qing lifted her head, her eyes slightly moist, as she smiled and said.

"We're already married, but Qing'er has yet to call me husband. I'm going to be leaving soon, come, let me hear you call me that." Qing Shui propped the weight of his upper body with his elbows on the stone table, as he leaned in smiling.

"I'm not going to!" Mu Qing chided shyly.

"Oh, then I'll give way. You can call me dear elder brother." Qing Shui smiled and continued saying.

"I'm older than you... You rascal..." Mu Qing pouted Qing Shui angrily, but soon broke into a smile. Unknowingly, Qing Shui was already sitting right next to her.

"You must choose either one today, else your husband is going to pleasure you here." Qing Shui looked at Mu Qing, whose face was flushed red.

"Ah, you dare..."

"You're doubting me?" Smiling, Qing Shui's left hand skillfully reached in under her clothes.

...

Two days passed by very quickly.

Today, many people from the Mu Clan were around and there were also quite a number of people from the Godly Sword Clan. Dong Yan and Sun Yan were around as well. Qing Shui and Mu Qing stood together. Today was the day Qing Shui was leaving.

“Qing Shui, be careful on the way. You must remember to think of me,” Mu Qing let Qing Shui hold her hand and said.

“I will. I’ll think of you everyday. You must be careful as well. Practice formations whenever you’re free and the steps as well. That is very important,” Qing Shui repeated once again.

“I know, don’t worry. Sister Yu is here,” Mu Qing put up a forced smile and said.

A huge snow-white bird flew toward them, with Yu He on it. It arrived above the Mu Clan very quickly and then slowly descended. That charming figure and her dignified disposition made her seem to be like a fairy from the heavens. Many people fell into a daze.

They exchanged a few polite words and Qing Shui gave Mu Qing a tight hug before letting her go and waving to the others. Dong Yan and Sun Yan had wanted to send him off, but were rejected by

Qing Shui.

They would eventually have to part, so why was there a need to feel unhappy for a second time.

Qing Shui called out the Fire Bird, waved to the others and then he quickly flew out of everyone's sight together with Yu He.

The Fire Bird and Yu He's huge snow-white bird flew next to each other. When the two beasts were flying next to each other, they looked like a large stretch of flat land.

Thinking that he was going to be returning home, Qing Shui felt very agitated. Just as he was thinking of his family, a fragrant scent drifted over and he turned his head to find that Yu He was standing behind him, smiling.

"I'd like to chat with you." Yu He smiled and looked at Qing Shui.

"I was just about to call Sister Yu here." Qing Shui rubbed his nose.

"Whenever you rub your nose, it means that you're not saying the truth. You're still not able to change your habit." Yu He suddenly felt very close to Qing Shui, as if she had found the feeling from the past.

Qing Shui was stunned for a while before smiling, "I'm speaking the truth."

“Sister Yu, do you think that something major will really be happening to the five continents?” Qing Shui gave it some thought and said.

“The five continents have not been at peace all along. It has always been a case of the strong holding supreme and powerful sects and aristocratic clans would monopolize a large part of the resources in an area and wield absolute power. However, there’s more than one powerful sect and there’s no way that they can always remain powerful. Therefore, it’s very normal for there to be endless killings happening everyday,” Yu He shook her head and said.

“Then why are there rumors that a great chaos will be happening across the five continents soon? There might even be great, powerful experts who would be taking part in it.” Qing Shui frowned. After all, they were but rumors and the land across the five continents was vast and he felt that it was hard for such an event to happen.

“Rumors are but rumors. However, a site of ancient ruins has been found in the Northern Sacred Lu Continent. It was just that it had been sealed up. The estimation was that that three years later, the seal will weaken and the experts from the five continents may gather there,” Yu He gave it some thought and said.

“Ancient ruins?”

Qing Shui was astonished. This was something which many

people knew or had heard of. Deity statues were already amazing enough, but when compared to ancient ruins, it was only like a drop in the ocean.

The pressure near the deity statues would be very strong, but the ancient ruins from the legend would be even more plagued with dangers. However, the benefits it brought were also tremendous. The place would be filled with opportunities and dangers, as well as endless heavenly and earthly treasures, Spirit Beasts, divine weapons and treasures. With just a little luck or if one was able to leave the place, their lives might change forever.